



Norwegian University  
of Life Sciences

**Master's Thesis 2024 30 ECTS**

The Faculty of Landscape and Society (LANDSAM)

# **Socio- Political and economic impacts of China-Pakistan economic corridor (CPEC) on the region: A case study of CPEC**

**Nazish Amna**

Master of Science in International Relations  
Noragric

## **CREDIT PAGE**

The Department of International Environment and Development Studies, Noragric, is the international gateway for the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU). Eight departments, associated research institutions and the Norwegian College of Veterinary Medicine in Oslo. Established in 1986, Noragric's contribution to international development lies in the interface between research, education (Bachelor, Master, and PhD programmes) and assignments.

The Noragric Master theses are the final theses submitted by students in order to fulfil the requirements under the Noragric Master programme "International Environmental Studies", "International Development Studies" and "International Relations".

The findings in this thesis do not necessarily reflect the views of Noragric. Extracts from this publication may only be reproduced after prior consultation with the author and on condition that the source is indicated. For rights of reproduction or translation contact Noragric.

© Nazish Amna, April 2024,  
[nazishamnaqmc@gmail.com](mailto:nazishamnaqmc@gmail.com)  
Department of International Environment and Development Studies (Noragric)  
P.O. Box 5003 N-1432 Ås Norway  
Tel.: +47 67 23 00 00  
<https://www.nmbu.no/en/faculty/landsam/department/noragric>.

## DEDICATION

---

*I humbly dedicate this research work to Almighty Allah, Who is my well-wisher!*

---

## **DECLARATION**

I, Nazish Amna, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature.....

Date.....

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

First, I thank to Almighty Allah, who given me strength and knowledge to complete this thesis. I offer special praise to our HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD (Peace Be Upon Him) who is an ocean of knowledge and forever a torch of guidance for humanity as a whole.

I would like to thank Stig Jarle Hansen, my research supervisor who has been a great source of encouragement all throughout. Stig was always helpful whenever I needed him. I appreciate all your contributions of time and ideas.

I am also thankful to my parents who without them I would not achieve this level of knowledge. I would also like to thank my husband Muhammad Shoib and my son Muhammad Adan for their love patience and encouragement.

Here I will also place my thanks to my brother Muhammad Atif Bilal and my sister-in-law Ruqiya Koser for their valuable guidance and moral support. I would like to thank all the interviewee who took part on the interview.

## **Abstract:**

Cooperation is a type of interaction which is used to accomplish the shared goals with the help of others. It is a cooperation that helps to eliminate socio economic and political unrest in the region and improves the standard life of local people with the help of CPEC projects such as infrastructure, airports, railways, seaports, and dams. CPEC cooperative initiatives have positive and negative impacts on the local people of Pakistan. The study shows that CPEC projects are the source of economic growth in terms of employment for locals, production of energy resources and improving the infrastructure of the country. This helps the people to invest and promote trade. This study also looks at the CPEC cooperation as the cause of environmental problems that are risky for the health of locals. This study shows that CPEC is a debt trap because it puts an economic burden on the people in terms of inflation, high energy costs. CPEC cooperation is also a cause of occupation of land for Balochi and due to this the livelihood of people of Balochistan is disturbed due to displacement.

## **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

BCIMEC	Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor
CARs	Central Asian Republics
CCWAEC	China-Central and West Asia Economic Corridor
CCTV	China Central Television
CIPEC	China-Indochina Peninsula Economic Corridor
CMREC	China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor
CPEC	China-Pakistan Economic Corridor
CO <sub>2</sub>	Carbon Dioxide
GDP	Gross Domestic Progress
GB	Gilgit-Baltistan
ILO	International labor organization
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
LNG	Liquified Natural Gas
MSR	Maritime Silk Road
NELB	The new Eurasian Land Bridge
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisation
OBOR	One Belt One Road
PRC	People's Republic of China
SEZs	Special Economic Zones
SREB	Silk Road Economic Belt
UNPO	Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization
US	United States

## **Table and Figures**

Figure 1: **CPEC highway network**

Figure 2: **China's Oil Imports**

Figure 3: **Map of One belt One Road**

Figure 4: **New Gwadar international airport**

Figure 5: **Pak-China friendship hospital.**



## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1: Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Problem Statement .....	2
1.2 Research Questions .....	3
1.3 Thesis structure .....	3
<b>Chapter 2: Literature review and Theoretical Framework .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 The potential benefits of the CPEC .....	4
2.2 The potential negative aspects of the CPEC .....	7
<b>2.3 Theoretical Framework.....</b>	<b>9</b>
2.3.1 Cooperation and realist approach.....	9
2.3.2 Cooperation and liberal approach .....	12
2.3.3 Cooperation and Constructivist approach.....	15
<b>Chapter:3 Research Methodology .....</b>	<b>18</b>
3.1 Qualitative Research Method .....	18
3.2 Triangulation process.....	19
3.3 Trustworthiness, validity, and reliability.....	19
<b>3.4 Research design: Case study.....</b>	<b>20</b>
3.4.1 Sampling Approach .....	21
3.4.2 Interview .....	22
3.4.3 Open Codingmethod.....	22
3.5 Ethical aspects.....	23
3.6 Limitations.....	23
<b>Chapter:4 Background .....</b>	<b>24</b>
4.1 China Pakistan economic corridor.....	25
4.2 Gwadar: The crux of CPEC .....	26
4.2.1 Geographical location of Gwadar Port .....	27
4.2.2 Importance of Gwadar Port .....	27
4.3 One belt one road initiative.....	30
4.3.1 The Silk Road Economic Belt .....	31
4.3.2 The Maritime Silk Road .....	31

<b>Chapter:5 Findings and Discussion.....</b>	<b>33</b>
5.1 Findings.....	33
5.1.1 Infrastructure development.....	34
5.1.2 Flow of Trade.....	35
5.1.3 Job opportunities.....	35
5.1.4 Change in the latest political scenario.....	36
5.1.5 Exchange cultural values.....	38
5.2 Discussion.....	38
5.2.1 CPEC and Cooperation (positive impacts).....	39
5.2.2 CPEC and cooperation (negative impacts).....	42
<b>Chapter:6 Conclusion and recommendation.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Appendix.....</b>	<b>56</b>

# Chapter: 1 introduction

## Introduction:

Regions are specific and recognizable territories in physical, geographical, historical, language, climate, and socioeconomic terms so that citizens are identified with them. The region is a link between local communities and the state (Vujadinovič, & Šabić, 2017). Regions offer a framework for comprehending various places' characteristics, relationships, and complexities. Regions improve the awareness of spatial dynamics and relationships, support efficient government and policy making, and aid in creating specialized knowledge (Vujadinovič, & Šabić, 2017). Pakistan, situated in the northwestern part of the South Asian subcontinent and divided into six major regions: the Northern High Mountainous Region, the Western Low Mountainous Region, the Balochistan Plateau, the Potohar Uplands, and the Punjab and Sindh fertile plains (The World Factbook, 2024).

Economic corridors are trade treaties or agreements that govern economic relations between two or more countries in order to facilitate the movement of products and services across regional borders. The main idea behind establishing economic corridors is that governments want to strengthen economic cooperation while also ensuring trans-regional market connections (Qadri et al., 2023). In recent years, Pakistan has shifted its focus to economic diplomacy and regional economic integration, having previously prioritized strategic and security concerns. This change is exemplified by proposals such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (Fazal et al., 2023). The CPEC initiative exemplifies China and Pakistan's rising interest in and shared vision for their political and economic futures. This transformation aims to promote economic development, trade, and connectivity to establish stability and prosperity in Pakistan and China. CPEC is the key component of this cooperation (Fazal et al., 2023).

The Pakistan-China cooperation, particularly through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), is significant for the local people as well as the world. It has the potential to serve as a model for global cooperation for the benefit of the people (Yang et al., 2022). Mutual understanding between China and Pakistan can potentially facilitate deeper cooperation in terms of peace, development, and growth of economy with other countries (CPEC Secretariat, 2023). This cooperation has deepened the relationship between Pakistan and China and has also opened new opportunities for Pakistan (Yang et al., 2022). Furthermore, the cooperation

between Pakistan and China could lead to the promotion of cultural exchange and understanding between the two countries. This can foster greater mutual understanding and harmony among diverse cultures, promoting global peace and cooperation (Saqib et al., 2023). The cooperation between the two countries has been growing over the years, with China being Pakistan's top supplier for military hardware and nuclear technology (Allauddin & Ahmed, 2020). Furthermore, they have agreed to intensify collaboration in defence, counterterrorism, and space and maritime technology. However, this cooperation has raised concerns among other countries, particularly India and the US, who worry about the potential for the economic corridor to also serve as a major naval base for the Chinese and Pakistani Navy. Therefore, the dynamics of this cooperation could have far-reaching implications for regional and global security and stability (Wolf, 2016).

The CPEC is a significant component of China's One Belt, One Road (OBOR) Initiative (Ameen, & Kamran, 2017). The One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative is a massive multinational initiative that includes the development of energy and infrastructural resources that are essential to China and its partners. The One Belt, One Road Initiative aims to build physical links between Asian, African, and European countries through sea and land routes. The objective of One Belt, One Road (OBOR) is to provide the greatest global platform for policy, social, cultural, commercial, financial, and economic cooperation (Ahmed, 2018). Considering the strategic and economic significance of CPEC, it's considered to be one of the OBOR projects that intends to link China's northwest region of Xinjiang with Gwadar Port in southwest Pakistan. China would save time and money by having access to the Indian Ocean for Middle Eastern oil supplies (Zaffar, 2016).

### **1.1 Problem statement:**

The CPEC can be a mutually beneficial venture due to the economic incentives and regional integration in the form of networks, connectivity, and partnerships. It is expected that this flagship would enhance economic and financial cooperation and understanding between Pakistan and China. Khursheed et al. (2019) demonstrated that there is significant research interest and activity focused on analyzing the OBOR project and its effect on the region. For example, geopolitical analysis, environmental studies, economics impacts, socio-cultural studies are included in OBOR project related research. Though, very few studies have focused on analyzing the Socio-Political and economic viability and practical worth of the CPEC project, and the aim of this study is to focus on the development and socio-political and

economic integration, which are associated with the CPEC project. The purpose of this research is to look at China-Pakistan cooperation in terms of infrastructure development and investment. This master thesis will be helpful to understand the CPEC with different perspectives. Pakistan faces challenges due to its low education rate, high unemployment rate and an underdeveloped army with lack of modern technology (Arshad, 2018). According to Malik (2018), CPEC will be a game changer for Pakistan's future development (Malik, 2018). CPEC does not only bring economic integration among regional and participant countries, and advances in geostrategic position, but it provides people-to-people contact, social and cultural cooperation.

## **1.2 Research questions:**

**Main RQ:** What are the positive impacts of Socio-Political and Economic Dimensions of China-Pakistan economic corridor (CPEC) on the region?

### **Sub-RQs:**

1. How can CPEC have a positive socio-political impact on the region?
2. What are the potential negative aspects of the CPEC in the region?
3. What are the results of the CPEC we can see in the region?

## **1.3 Thesis Structure:**

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter provides introduction to the thesis topic and presents the research questions and the objective of the thesis. Chapter 2 presents the literature review related to the Topic. Additionally, within section 2.3 the theoretical framework will explain which will be used to understand cooperation. The third chapter provides details of the study's methodology, data collection, and analyzing methods. As this thesis is a qualitative study it addresses research design, data collection methods, and validity and reliability, but also justify the qualitative approach. It also looks at ethical considerations and the limitations of the thesis. Chapter 4 presents the contextual background of the study. Chapter 5 provides findings and then presents discussion of the thesis while Chapter 6 presents the conclusion.

## **Chapter: 2 Literature Review:**

Benzaquen introduces the idea of cooperation from sociology, which is a type of interaction in which people work together to accomplish a shared objective and is fundamental to the makeup of the majority of social groups (Benzaquen, J.F., 2006). According to Arroyo (2008), cooperation is a cultural construct built on social interaction, in which objectives are shared, actions are taken together, and advantages are dispersed fairly among all members of the system (Arroyo, J.C.T., 2008). Moreover, Cooperation can also be seen as a means of reaching the best possible agreement and benefiting all parties. This viewpoint emphasizes cooperation is important to accomplishing shared objectives and building solid relationships between the state (Rozaanov et al., 2020). International cooperation is defined as follows by Kalevi Jaakko Holsti (1988):

- The belief that two or more people have a common interest, value, and potential outcome that could be achieved with cooperation from all sides.
- Agreement on a certain issue between two or more nations in order to take advantage of differences in interests or equality.
- The belief or expectation of one nation that its policies may aid in the accomplishment of the objectives of another nation.
- A deal between nations to carry out their mutual understanding.

As such, Cooperation is working together to accomplish shared goals. The objective of cooperation is to increase a country's wealth via respect, appreciation, and trust. The many forms of cooperation differ greatly from one another. It could manifest as national integration, diplomatic relations, or economic links. It depends on the goals that need to be accomplished. Similarly, in the case of China and Pakistan, cooperation becomes the most vital element to achieve the common goals and leads the countries toward development with the help of CPEC.

### **2.1 The potential benefits of the CPEC:**

Over the past decade, CPEC, as a flagship project of the BRI, has significantly impacted Pakistan. Iqbal (2018) claims that once the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is completed, the Pakistani people will have plenty of job opportunities, and a bright and happy future that will bring peace and prosperity to the country's regions will arise. (Iqbal, 2018). CPEC is responsible for the growth of projects like the Gwadar Port, which accommodates

more cargo and freight. This contributes to the creation of jobs for engineers, stevedore workers, and construction workers, improving the standard of living for people across the country. Furthermore, in politically unstable places, more job opportunities for locals are associated with reduced social unrest and other socioeconomic issues. (Deng, Yeo, and Du 2018). Deng, Yeo, and Du elaborated that Gwadar Port is notable for being situated in Balochistan, one of the most underdeveloped and unstable areas in Pakistan. It has been stated that the city's growth and development have been enhanced by the port's expansion. Consequently, unemployment has significantly decreased since the port's expansion has improved people's livelihoods and increased their satisfaction with Balochistani government policies (Deng, Yeo, and Du 2018).

The improvement and expansion of Pakistan's road network is one of the key advantages of CPEC projects. It is anticipated that the CPEC rail project will boost connectivity between Pakistani cities and enhance the country's transportation infrastructure. According to Rehman et al. (2018), by improving connectivity between Pakistan's cities, road initiatives have benefited local people already. The Karakoram Highway, which connects Peshawar and Karachi, and railway tracks are two specific examples of how locals' mobility has become more effective and easier. According to Asomani-Boateng, Fricano, and Adarkwa (2015), locals can easily meet their families and friends with road and transport infrastructure development. Many studies also have reported the CPEC is beneficial for local communities' well-being through tourism development and festivals (Nawijn & Mitas, 2012; Yolal et al., 2016). In addition to improving the domestic city-to-city connections, the road developments have the potential to increase trade between China and Pakistan which can enhance both China's and Pakistan's economic growth. The transportation infrastructure that has been established enhances accessibility and dependability in product delivery and manufacture. Greater market accessibility for a business boosts competition and produces additional revenue when it comes to commercial opportunities. (Calderon, & Servén, 2004). The less developing countries' economy depend on trade corridor. The efficiency of trade and transportation is increased by the development of transportation facilities, both domestically (inside a state and its provinces) and internationally (among states) (Njinkeu et al., 2008).

For economic growth, energy supplies need to be reliable and sufficient. Nevertheless, Pakistan is facing energy scarcity problems. The local population of the country is not very rich, and the nation is heavily dependent on foreign energy supplies. so, cooperation with China

in the energy sector can enhance the supply of energy domestically. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor's energy projects produced about 17 billion kWh, or 14.5 percent of the total output, in the 2018–2019 fiscal. As the CPEC energy constructions were installed, it is evident that household electric power supplies have grown significantly. It is anticipated that this trend will continue even after additional energy constructions have started to operate. A greater energy supply can help address the issues of energy scarcity, which not only enhances people's quality of life but also promotes economic expansion. The transportation and manufacturing sectors heavily rely on reliable and sufficient electric power (Fatima & Nasim, 2019).

The agriculture industry, which accounts for a large portion of Pakistan's GDP given its agricultural nature, has experienced a decline in the recent ten years (Raza, Ali, & Mehboob, 2012). Pakistan is thus placing equal emphasis on the development of the agricultural sector as it does on the infrastructure and energy sectors, among others. August 2016 saw a CPEC conference in Islamabad to finalize a long-term plan for agricultural cooperation that runs from 2025–2030. A variety of agricultural production-related categories were covered in the strategy, including livestock, water resources for irrigation, fisheries development, public outreach initiatives, and finance solutions for associated needs. This project will facilitate the production of various fertilizers to increase production capacity, as well as the exchange of information necessary for the distribution of agricultural products and equipment, the sharing of knowledge about the operation and maintenance of agricultural tools, and the leasing of necessary machinery (Ahmed & Mustafa, 2016). Agénor & Moreno-Dodson (2006) added that CPEC is a project aimed at developing infrastructure. It will raise Pakistan's total infrastructure up to date with contemporary norms. The energy projects in the rural areas will offer the chance to grow the irrigation industry, which will cultivate a larger area and guarantee a rise in output. The growth rate is enhanced by improved infrastructure. (Agénor & Moreno-Dodson, 2006).

Two of the biggest nuclear powers in South Asia are Pakistan and India, whose bilateral relations have a history of instability. India saw itself to be the hegemon of the area because of US assistance. In Pakistan's new economic paradigm, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a focal point that offers opportunities for autonomous action, notably in the fight against Western influence. However, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative will allow Pakistan to restore normal relations with Afghanistan, Iran, and India while also maintaining an equitable environment in the region (Bhatti et al., 2020). Hal (2015)



demonstrated that China's military and economic support would enable Pakistan to close the growing disparity between its military, nuclear, and economic capabilities—a critical step toward defending against Indian aggression. The protection of Pakistan's coastal region will be strengthened by China's naval presence at the Gwadar ports (Hal, 2015). China's presence in Gwadar will support efforts to monitor oil transportation throughout the Persian Gulf. Gwadar Seaport can be used to monitor Indian naval activity in the Gulf of Persia and the Gulf of Aden, which is important for military and strategic actions (Hal, 2015).

The CPEC initiative has led to advances in energy systems, road and railway infrastructure, agriculture, and industrial production. All of these developments could be toward a new and prosperous morning on Pakistani soil. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will receive full credit for these developments, which are beneficial to Pakistan's economic growth, internal stability, peace and prosperity, technological advancement, social interaction with other people in the region, and incredible increase in strategic importance. (Javaid, 2016). CPEC could have a significant positive impact on not only the overall growth of the national economy but also the prosperity and well-being of the people at the local level. It will not only pass through the Pak-China economic region but also expand beyond its borders. (Butt & Butt, 2015).

## **2.2 Potential negative aspects of the CPEC:**

While the CPEC generates optimism for improvement and opportunity for the local people. Pakistan will need to overcome significant obstacles and issues related to its long-standing realpolitik before the CPEC can be implemented effectively.

The occupation of land in Balochistan is a negative aspect of CPEC. Other than a small number of nationalists, political parties in Balochistan and KP are hesitant to take their rightful place in the CPEC project. Regarding Baloch rights, there is also conflict between the central and the Baloch administration. People of Baluchis always experience marginalization and loss of access to social, political, and economic opportunities (Ishaq et al., 2017). They may become a minority in their own country because of CPEC. The local population in Gwadar and throughout Balochistan is being disregarded in terms of employment and other opportunities as the newcomers begin to pour into the area. The community has an overwhelming sense of disappointment and deprivation (The diplomat, 2015). In 2017 Ishaq highlighted that they are opposing the CPEC and Gwadar Port projects because, despite their wealth, they do not have

access to adequate drinking water or basic healthcare. Baloch people often have the impression that they are lacking in basic needs (Ishaq et al., 2017). They oppose and fear the Gwadar Port project since it will deprive them of their royalties and local resource access. Baloch separatists view the CPEC as an attempt to further marginalize the indigenous Baloch people in the name of economic growth and as a foreign occupation of their land. The Economic Corridor is perceived as a tool of the central government to tighten its hold on Baloch's resources and as expansionism by the Punjabi community. Because of this, there are growing worries that the project will mainly help China and Islamabad, offering little in return for the Baloch (Ishaq et al., 2017).

There is a lack of transparency and communication between Islamabad and the provinces, which contributes to the CPEC project being just a mystery and confusion. (Zaman & Qamar, 2015). According to Malik & Naseer (2015) there is no clarity in the decision-making process, particularly because the provinces are not given enough consideration. The smaller provinces are thus curious as to whether or not they will gain anything from the CPEC (Malik & Naseer, 2015). In this regard, it should be noted that neither China nor Pakistan has a particularly impressive track record of encouraging accountability and transparency. Therefore, Pakistani society's political trust is undermined by widespread corruption, lack of transparency, and allegedly unequal resource allocation in CPEC-related projects. Because of this, China has the same issues with inefficiency and corruption as the United States and other international investors (BBC, 2015).

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is causing several environmental problems. These include deforestation, air and water pollution, and biodiversity loss. The CPEC's demand for energy derived from coal is also contributing to environmental degradation. Coal-based energy is harmful to populations whose livelihoods depend on the environment as well as biodiversity (Ullah et al., 2021). Three quarters of the newly planned energy has been generated from traditional coal-fired power plants to encounter energy crisis in Sindh, Punjab and Balochistan provinces (CPEC, 2019). Traditional coal power plants are the major sources of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and smog, which contribute to global warming and acid rain (UCSUSA, 2017). Nonetheless, the environment and public health are adversely affected by coal power. Burning coal emits poisons and other pollutants into the air, potentially causing contamination of the water and air. Human health would be adversely affected by breathing in dangerous air or drinking contaminated water. The already grave circumstances would get worse with the

recent construction of multiple coal-fired power stations as part of the CPEC. Pakistan must thus take seriously the detrimental effects that CPEC energy projects are having on the environment and public health (Fatima & Nasim, 2019).

Pakistan may face severe financial difficulties after loan payments to Chinese companies cease, along with interest and profit payments that must be made (Wani, 2020). One of the primary concerns in this regard is the assured return on equity for Chinese investors. The majority of CPEC projects are financed by foreign direct investment, with a debt-to-equity ratio of approximately 80:20, or occasionally 75:25. In most cases, a 17 percent guaranteed return on equity (ROE) is included in the financing mechanism (Husain 2017b). However, this school of thought contends that Pakistan would be in a serious financial crisis once the repayment period begins because of the outflows of debt service, the payment of a return on equity in US dollars, and the outward movement of remittances totalling approximately US\$ 2-3 billion annually in the medium term (Ahmad 2017).

### **2.3 Theoretical Framework:**

In this section three different theories will highlight the concept of cooperation in different ways. With the help of cooperation, the positive and negative aspects of CPEC are highlighted that bring the change in the region. All these perspectives are discussed already in literature review. The purpose of this study is to focus on socio-political and economic cooperation which refers to the progress of societies in all aspects. The study below discusses the theories of cooperation which are most relevant to the research topic.

#### **2.3.1 Cooperation and realist approach:**

Kenneth N. Waltz, a leading expert on neo-realism, describes the system as anarchy. According to neorealism, the anarchic international system influences all choices made regarding foreign policy. (Lamy, 2011). The basic principle of neo-realism is that in anarchic systems, states with great power interact with one another and have greater influence. According to Waltz (2010) three characteristics of domestic politics and international politics are similar in terms of: "ordering principles," "character of the units," and "distribution of capabilities" (Waltz, 2010). Firstly, he argues that there are differences between the principles of international and domestic

politics. The domestic political system is hierarchical and centralized whereas the international system is decentralized and anarchic in structure(ibid).

Waltz (2010) makes a comparison between the international political system and the economic markets that are driven by the decisions, actions, and interactions of individuals seeking personal gain in the economy. In this sense, he contends that the self-help concept, like the market principle, ensures the maintenance of the international political system (Waltz, 2010). According to the theory, for states to exist in international relations, they should pursue their security. This structure highlights the relative power distribution within the international system, making the distribution of capabilities the most crucial component to comprehend international politics. (Waltz, 2010). Neo-realists believe that since the structure of international politics limits states' ability to cooperate, the most important thing for a state to do is ensure that it achieves a greater advantage than others (ibid). When given the chance to cooperate for our mutual benefit, insecure states will wonder how the benefit should be distributed, raising the question "Who will gain more?" instead of "Will both of us gain?" (Waltz, 2010).

In a competitive, anarchic system of international politics, a state's influence increases with its level of power (Waltz, 2001). The belief that gaining more power is necessary to both survive and maintain national security is indicative of a zero-sum mentality in international politics. This means 'my winnings plus your winnings are exactly equal to the losses of our opponent or opponents. In a zero-sum game, the problem is entirely one of distribution...' (Waltz, 2001). The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a significant infrastructure undertaking that links China's northwest province of Xinjiang with Gwadar Port in southwest Pakistan. There's a chance that some industries or areas in Pakistan would suffer if a single sector or region benefits disproportionately from CPEC developments. Moreover, Pakistan might become excessively dependent on China because of the CPEC loan, creating a zero-sum scenario.

According to Waltz, the states are acting defensively. The theory of International Politics by Waltz impacts the thinking of defensive realism, which is concerned with security dilemmas and the logic of balance of power. According to defensive realists, states can occasionally cooperate to achieve common goals and interests in an anarchy system (Oye, 2015). Oye asserts that formal bilateral and multilateral negotiations, international regime creation, and cooperation are common obligations made by governments (Oye, 2015). CPEC initiative is the

example of formal bilateral cooperation and negotiation between governments that address shared interests and promote mutual benefits through negotiation and collaboration. It is based on extensive infrastructure development and economic cooperation between China and Pakistan, with the aim of enhancing connectivity, trade, and economic development in the region. Defensive realists, however, argue that the structure of international politics limits state cooperation in two ways: first, defensive realists argue that in the anarchic international system, states seek to maximize their security. When states engage in cooperation, they have to focus on enhancing their own security rather than pursuing absolute gains. The focus of the states on relative gains where one state can gain and lose by another. Secondly, defensive realists assert that while cooperation among states enhances security in the short terms, the dependency among the states can also increase through cooperation. These two situations make the cooperation limited (Waltz, 2010). Therefore, States must decide when to make alliances and when to leave them by figuring out who stands to gain the most from cooperation. According to defensive realists, if a state anticipates gaining less than others, it will stop cooperating with others even if it has common goals or interests with others (ibid). To survive in the anarchic international system, states must behave by evaluating which course of action is best. Defensive realists are likely to emphasize the geopolitical considerations and power dynamics that support China's involvement in CPEC. China's participation in CPEC can be attributed to a desire to strengthen its geopolitical power, get access to vital resources, and broaden its economic interests. From this perspective, China's CPEC cooperation with Pakistan can be considered as a calculated decision based on an assessment of equal gains and strategic benefits. Defensive realists also highlighted the potential risks and dependencies that arise from the CPEC initiative. For example, Pakistan becomes increasingly reliant on China for investment and infrastructure development, which could potentially limit its autonomy and decision-making sovereignty in the long term.

According to defensive realists, states only create institutions when they think they will enable them to accomplish their objectives in sectors where there is no risk to national security (Waltz, 2010). International institutions are instruments of statecraft, but they are mostly "a reflection of state interest," which has little effect on cooperation. (Jervis, 1999). In the case of CPEC, the involvement of China can be seen as a strategic move to advance its economic interests and regional influence by investing in Pakistan. According to the defensive realist, CPEC is China's intended effort to use economic cooperation as a tool of statecraft to attain its geopolitical objectives. Defensive realists are concerned with the security dilemma because they believe

that states are rational actors (Glaser, 2010). Glaser emphasizes that in this complex international environment, states should formulate policies that are appropriate for their national security (2010). Following Waltz's theory of the security problem, self-help security, misperceptions about other actors, and doubts about other actors' motivations all contribute to the security dilemma. States are under enormous pressure to cooperate and compete regarding the security issue (Glaser, 2010). He claims that although cooperation could reduce national insecurity as a means of reducing military threats, there are instances when conflict can be avoided. As a self-help tool, cooperation can boost a state's security, and defensive realists believe that states are the ones that maximize security (ibid). In the context of CPEC, Pakistan's cooperation with China can resolve security concerns of both countries. Through economic and strategic ties with China, Pakistan can enhance its security and counter threats from neighbouring countries. Similarly, China's investment in CPEC views its regional influence and mitigates its security risk along its western border. One reason why a state's security depends on the actions of other states is that its leaders try to avoid gaining too much power in comparison to others since doing so could compromise their security.

John Mearsheimer bases his theory of offensive realism on the fundamental assumption of an anarchic international system, stating that nations constitute a potential threat to one another and can never be confident of each other's intentions. In such an unstable and uncertain world, they prioritize security. According to Mearsheimer, all great powers strive to optimize their own security by increasing their relative share of global power; becoming a regional hegemon is the goal for all great powers, as the most powerful state within a regional system is the most secure state (Mearsheimer 2001). According to offensive realists, nations form alliances with other states as "temporary marriages of convenience" and always act in self-help for the sake of their security (Mearsheimer 2001).

### **2.3.2 Cooperation and liberal approach:**

The term "liberalism" has its roots in the Enlightenment era of the eighteenth century in Europe. Intellectual and philosophical developments that highlighted reason, science, individual rights, and faith in progress defined the Enlightenment. During that period, intellectuals aimed to utilize logic and analytical reasoning to comprehend and enhance several facets of human society, such as politics, economics, and social structures. (Mearsheimer, 2001). Liberals are always optimistic about bringing about greater safety and peace in the

world because of this. Most liberals think that both global prosperity and the possibility of war may be decreased. They may be referred to as "idealist" or "utopian" (Ibid).

Neo-liberals place more value on how to promote and support cooperation in international politics, especially in the trade and investment, travel concerns (Jackson & Sørensen, 2013). Neoliberals share old liberal ideas about the possibility of progress and change. This shows the process of modernization and integration that enlarges the scope for cooperation across international boundaries (Ibid). Neoliberal theorists often emphasize the concept of "integration fed on itself" when discussing economic and political cooperation. This idea suggests that cooperation in one specific area or transactional relationship can lead to a positive effect, fostering cooperation in other areas as well (Haas 1958; Keohane and Nye 1975). China and Pakistan introduced the CPEC project to bring economic prosperity in the country. That development entailed a higher level of trade, communication, cultural exchange, and other relations and transactions across borders.

Neo-liberals believe that states should cooperate if gains are fairly distributed and that the establishment of security institutions like alliances and treaties also prevents wars. (Lamy, 2011). According to Keohane (2011) international institutions can encourage states to develop cooperation for mutual benefits, which can have an impact on them attaining collective gains. The cost associated with forming and upholding agreements among members is lessened by institutions. He makes the point that institutions can support reciprocity practices, which encourage involved parties to honor their commitments to ensure that others do the same (Keohane, 2011). Keohane (2011) demonstrated that in an anarchic international system, states do not know the intentions or future actions of their partners and rivals. International institutions can lessen uncertainty in this chaotic system of international politics by encouraging transparent discussions, which include handling a wide range of topics under comparable rules over an extended length of time and monitoring the actions of the players. (Keohane, 2011).

It is a fundamental belief shared by neo-realists and neo-liberal institutionalists that states are motivated by self-interest. Their opinions on the function of international institutions, however, differ. Neo-realists are typically more pessimistic about the ability of institutions to foster cooperation. While neo-liberal institutionalists believe that institutions are vital in forming and maintaining cooperative ties among states. Self-interested actors cooperate with

other states for mutual gains. (Keohane, 1984). However, Neo-liberal institutionalists agree that anarchy and the security dilemma create difficulties, but they also argue that strong international institutions may significantly lessen these difficulties and foster an environment where states with various goals can cooperate. The international order is typically peaceful and stable, with states cooperating, following formal and informal laws and regulations, and cooperating to achieve mutually beneficial goals (Oye, 1985: Axelord, 1984).

Neoliberalism supports the concept of comparative advantages for this neoliberalist defining principle is the concept of “free markets” (Chomsky, 1999). Neoliberalists explain that free markets allow for economic growth and promote wealth, which in turn will trickle down to the poorest in society and make society more financially prosperous (Callinicos, 2003). To liberalize markets, state intervention in the form of welfare support is sold off to the private sector, as, according to neoliberals, the profit incentive will promote higher efficiency, and competition with other companies will lower prices (Chang, 2010). Neoliberalism is often regarded as the most economically effective form of production, and it serves the interests of all nation states (Chang, 2010). This is essentially based on Ricardo's theory of comparative advantage, which states that each nation-state specializes in what it is best at producing, lowering production costs, and making items cheaper for consumers through international trade (Grint & Nixon, 2015). Neoliberalism supports international trade that helps to promote efficiency, lower costs, and greater economic welfare (Hartwell, 2001).

Neo-liberalism also made a significant contribution by explaining cooperation in the absence of a hegemonic power. The liberal economist Kindleberger is the source of the concept of hegemonic stability. He contends that a stabilizer is necessary to maintain global economic stability. (kindleberge, 1973). Neo-liberal thinkers believe that hegemony is not necessary for cooperation to occur. Establishing and preserving peace, stability, and free trade are significantly more dependent on institutions and regimes. Keohane (1984) highlighted that cooperation and discord are determined not only by the state's interests and power, but also by norms, values, and institutions. Certain sorts of cooperation can be facilitated by hegemony, but these are neither essential nor sufficient conditions for cooperation (Keohane (1984).

Neoliberals are more optimistic than realists in terms of cooperation because they believe that changes in strategy preferences are generally enough to achieve mutual gain. Neoliberal thinking which emphasizes the impact of expanding cross-border activities (Jackson &



Sørensen, 2013). Karl Deutsch and his associates argued that interconnecting activities helped create common values and identities among people from different states and paved the way for peaceful, cooperative relations by making war increasingly costly and thus more unlikely. (Deutsch et al., 1957). For example, the economic interdependence established by CPEC could lead to a situation in which the costs of war outweigh potential advantages. This economic initiative would be a deterrent to military aggression.

### **2.3.3 Cooperation and Constructivist approach:**

Constructivism is the mainstream of international relations that is presented by Alexander Wendt and Peter Katzenstein. The constructivist theory focuses on the concept of state identity that can provide an important alternative and option to rational choice theory. State identity is mainly about non-material factors such as values, culture, norms, ideas, etc. (BEHRAVESH, M., 2011). Constructivists believe that the fundamental frameworks of international politics are social and that these structures determine actors' identities and interests. As a result, the world is shaped by both knowledge and material factors. According to constructivists, this most significant relationship is between agents and structures. Furthermore, constructivists share a focus on understanding and explaining how ideas define international structures, as well as how structures influence the identities and interests of states and non-state actors (BEHRAVESH, M., 2011). CPEC perceptions are shaped not only by material interests but also by individuals' identities and understandings of their relationships. For example, China's view of CPEC as part of its larger Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) underlines its identity as a rising global power-seeking regional influence and connectivity. Similarly, Pakistan's opinion of CPEC as a game changer for its economy is influenced not only by the financial benefits but also by its status as a developing country in need of infrastructure development and economic progress.

Though Nicholas Onuf devised the term, Alexander Wendt popularized it. Onuf famously argues that states like individuals are living in a “world of our own making.” (Onuf, N. G., 2023). Constructivism is a social world; it is a world of intersubjectivity. It is made of the interactions of the individuals and their common beliefs and consciousness about different phenomena (Reus-Smit., 2002). John Searle argues Constructivism gives importance to an individual's perception and thinking not the material factors or “brute facts” (Searle, J. R., 1995).

Wendt argues that the identities and interests of states are basically found when states interact with other states. So, interests are not constant and rigid, rather they are changing and redefining (Hopf, T., 1998). The nature of a system whether being conflictual or otherwise, is not dependent upon anarchy, but on “shared culture” instantiated through “discursive social practices” (Rynning & Guzzini, 2001). For constructivists therefore, even national interests are essentially ideas that are socially constructed (Wicaksana, 2009). The notion of identity carries singular importance for the purposes of the constructivist school of thought. (Behraves, 2011). As per Wendt, it is the role of identity that crucially signifies the “motivational behavioral dispositions” of the international actors within a system (Behraves, 2011). In integration processes constructivism highlights the interdependence of social norms, institutions, ideas, and discourses which frame the perception of actors and thus the reality they are confronted with. This perspective suggests that interests, preferences and the perception of problems and situations are not fixed, but affected by the discursive field, in which they are constructed (Christiansen et al., 1999).

According to the constructivist viewpoint, community-building is the fundamental component of integration. Communities are associations or groups founded on shared beliefs. They have common normative or causal views and a collective identity (Egan et al., 2010). According to Egan (2010) Ideas and integration are causally linked in two ways. Firstly, he suggests that institutional integration is dependent on community-building. In this regard, a stronger sense of collective identity and a broader base of shared beliefs among member states contribute to increased institutional integration (Egan et al., 2010). community-building is facilitated by the existing institutional integration. Integrated decision-making results in extensive and regular contacts leading to change of identities and encouraging learning processes that result in shared understandings. Ultimately, this process of community building will gain considerable impetus toward deeper integration (Egan et al., 2010). Similarly, cooperation initiatives like CPEC involve extensive cooperation between China and Pakistan in various sectors such as trade, infrastructure, and energy. This cooperation creates regular interaction between China and Pakistan and facilitates the exchange of expertise, ideas, and experiences.

Another important contribution from the constructivist scholars is the emphasis on communicative and discursive practices in the integration process. The behavior, which is contracted among the member states, it is important to observe the language used to speak about processes. The constructivist’s scholars state that “the speech acts can be institutionalized into norms which as result can change realities and provide meaning for action” (Chebakova

2008). This means that the type of words which are used to speak about the integration process carries a specific meaning and attitude which navigates the member states throughout the decision-making process. By focusing on communication discourse within the European Union, the constructivist scholars focus on “arguing and reason-giving as an agency-centered mode of interaction” (Risse 2004). In return, this enables members to challenge the significance of the claims raised as a norm as well as to reach “communicative consensus about their understanding of a situation as well as justification for the principles and norms guiding their action, rather than acting purely based on strategic calculations” (Risse 2004). As a result of closer attention to the language and communication specifics, the constructivist theory enables us to pay closer attention to the discourse process. This helps to get a better understanding of deliberate processes for the establishment of clear consensus among the member states to reach for the common goal rather than purely looking at the processes as bargaining.

In case of Pakistan and China cooperation as a CPEC, the constructivists believe that this cooperation facilitates the regular interaction between them, exchange of ideas, expertise and experience. According to constructivists, interaction is the source to shape their collective identities, contributing to community building between China and Pakistan and shaping their shared beliefs. Additionally, in the concept of discursive and communication, constructivists highlight how language plays a vital role in the cooperation process. It helps to institutionalize norms and change the realities and provide the meanings for actions. In the constructivist’s perspective, cooperation between China and Pakistan fosters a deeper understanding of each other’s perspectives and facilitates the establishment of clear consensus, promoting bilateral relations and common goals.

## **Chapter:3 Research Methodology:**

### **3.1 Qualitative Research Method:**

According to Bryman (2012) the qualitative research is based on the importance of social behaviors in relative context. Social behavior can be logical if understood with particular context in which the members of social groups are functioning. The qualitative researcher participates very closely with the people or group being studied and it is helpful for the researcher to understand the values, attitudes, and beliefs in terms of the peculiar context in which the research is conducted. The involvement of researchers in a particular research context is helpful in developing the valid information (Bryman, 2012). Bryman (2016) has well explained that the qualitative research process is not fixed, but it is flexible and adjustable for research objectives (Bryman, 2016). It helps us to better understand the complex reality of a situation. CPEC is indeed considering the complexity of the subject matter. CPEC, which this thesis studies, is very much compounded with many factors of social, political, economic. Indeed, this thesis discusses and examines whether the CPEC has the positive aspects or negative aspects in the region. Thus, a method of qualitative research is adopted to this thesis as a tool providing a more complex reality of the CPEC process and contributing to a deeper understanding of its implications for the region.

According to Boyce & Neale (2006), Qualitative research methodology consists of intensive individual interviews with a small number of participants to find out their view on a particular program, idea, or situation. The aim of my paper is to get in-depth knowledge about socio-political and economic dimensions of CPEC. Therefore, the focus of this paper is to explore the attitude and behavior of participants about the CPEC project and its positive impacts on the development. In order to answer my research questions, I needed to collect data. I used multiple sources such as secondary sources and primary sources. In secondary sources I used news articles, books, and peer-reviewed articles, archives, government documents, policy reports, mass-media outputs, internet sources, magazines. Bryman (2016) argues that sources as mass-media outcomes are less reliable as compared to scientifically reviewed articles because mass-media outputs are mostly unclear and therefore the authenticity of mass-media can be questionable. Thus, this thesis is based on mainly scholarly books, journals, and articles, and took less information from mass-media sources. Because, with peer-reviewed articles, authorship is easier to establish. In this study about CPEC, mainly data used from google scholar and mass-media. Google scholar is reliably providing good and related information

(Bryman, 2016). Primary source data is used to achieve the best result. Primary data is collected directly from four participants (participant 1 was an Advocate at Lahore High Court, participant 2 was students at University of the Punjab, participant 3 was a policeman who visited CPEC sites with political protocol, and the last participant was a local man. I chose these participants because they were easily accessible and showed willingness to participate in the research. Another reason to choose these participants was that they have diverse backgrounds which helped me to get a range of perspectives regarding CPEC. Participants selection was done by using snowballing technique. All participants were given information about the CPEC process which I did not find clearly in secondary resources. All participants talked about how CPEC boosts the economy and makes the country economically strong. They elaborated that CPEC will work as a bridge that connects the whole region and eliminate the security issues among the states.

### **3.2 Triangulation process:**

Triangulation, which is produced by these two data sources, aids in capturing various aspects of the same phenomenon using a range of data collection techniques. Triangulation, as defined by Pathon (1999), is the process of using several techniques or sources of data in qualitative research to create a thorough understanding of a phenomenon. Triangulation is a useful technique for identifying the benefits of CPEC in the region from both primary and secondary sources. To answer the research questions, it is crucial to compare the various data gathered from these various sources because they helped shed light on the topic and helped me in developing my understanding of it. I used data triangulation for data collection such as interviews, documents, news articles, and surrounding observations. This helps me to minimize the biasness after comparing and analyzing the data from different sources. It enhances the reliability and objectivity in the study.

### **3.3 Trustworthiness, validity, and reliability:**

Trustworthiness of findings in scientific research is highly important. Reliability and validity are two factors which are used to assess the data in qualitative research (Bryman, 2012). validity of the research depends on how and what the researcher hears and observes. To ensure the reliability of the study, the researcher must consider credibility, dependability, and confirmability (Bryman, 2012). To ensure confirmability, the researcher must interpret what data tells the researcher in an objective way. Transcribing the interview manually and coding

them will provide the researchers deep understanding of the contents of the interview and what participants mean. Using triangulation will eliminate or reduce biases and increase the reliability and validity of the research.

Reliability means to which degree the study can be replicated. In qualitative research, it is difficult to meet; it is impossible to freeze a social setting and the situation of study to make it replicable. However, several strategies can be introduced to approach reliability. For example, the researcher needs to adopt a similar social role as the original researcher (Brayman, 2012). In this study, my knowledge about the CPEC is an advantage. Speaking the same language would provide a sense of comfort, which could lead to truthful information.

Validity refers to the accuracy with which the conclusions accurately reflect the data and the integrity and application of the methodologies used. Generalization allows researchers to document those findings that occur in various contexts and are not idiosyncratic to a particular context. As it was emphasized before, triangulation can increase conclusion validity (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). Triangulation allows researchers to ensure consistency in findings by using different means of accessing those findings, increasing the confidence that the results are not driven from one data source. There is a benefit of obtaining convergence about the same phenomenon using different sources.

### **3.4 Research design: Case study:**

In this research, the qualitative method was used. Research design is a plan for collecting and analyzing evidence that will make it possible for the investigator to answer whatever question he or she has posed. The design of an investigation touches all aspects of the research, from the minute details of data collection to the selection of the techniques of data collection (Ragin, 1994). In this research a case study research design was applied. A case study is one of the most extensively used strategies of qualitative social research. As Creswell (2014) defined that case studies are a qualitative design in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. The cases are bound by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time (Creswell, 2014). In this case study, the CPEC was analyzed as a case that reflects its significance as a transformative development initiative with wide-ranging implications for China, Pakistan, and the broader region. In this case study, the economic, political, and social impacts of CPEC in the region was analyzed. Trade patterns, employment

generation, investment flow and industrial growth were included in the economic dimension. In the political dimension, the bilateral relations between Pakistan and China, domestic politics of Pakistan was analysed. In this case study, the impacts of projects on local communities, livelihood, inequalities, cultural heritage, and environmental issues were analysed.

### **3.4.1 Sampling Approach:**

I am going to choose a snowballing sampling approach in this paper. Snowball sampling is a sampling technique in which the researcher samples initially a small group of people relevant to the research questions, and these sampled participants propose other participants who have had the experience or characteristics relevant to the research. In this case, a participant suggests a name to the researcher, the second subject provides a third name, and the process goes on. Snowballing is grouped within a wider set of linking and tracing methodologies (Bryman, 2012). I used triangulation to combine it with other methods in this thesis. Triangulating data from primary participants with information obtained from secondary sources enhances the validity and reliability of the research outcomes. It can be difficult to ensure coherence and consistency across several data sources, particularly when inconsistencies or contradicting facts exist.

The snowballing technique seeks to utilize the social networks of identified respondents. This method provides wider and growing potential contacts to participate in the research. Snowball sampling is respondent-driven; it is based on the assumption that there is a link between the first respondent and the following respondents. In addition, snowballing technique assumes that those participating are relevant informants to the study. This sampling technique is used most frequently to conduct qualitative research, primarily through interviews (Atkinson and Flint, 2001).

During the field work, my first contact was at the Lahore High Court with an advocate. Through him I was referred to another participant who was the policeman. After interviewing the policeman, he said that he was a student at University of the Punjab. Then he gave me the number of a student who was a student at University of the Punjab and writing the thesis on the CPEC. Student shared the number of his friend's father who was a local man.

Snowball samples have sample selection issues since people tend to associate with those who are similar to themselves. This is a typical phenomenon in social networks known as the

"homophily principle" (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). For example, male students may be more likely than female students to have male friends, although friendships between people who share similar political beliefs may be more common. As a result, snowball sampling creates samples that are related to previous samples, and the distribution of subsequent samples is determined by the earlier samples. As a result, using snowball sampling may result in poor sample selection and bias. To overcome these drawbacks, I selected male gender and to make my thesis more reliable. I used an iteration process between the respondents to reduce biases.

### **3.4.2 Interview:**

For data collection, I used semi-structured interview. A semi structured interview is a more structured interview rather than non-directive interviews. It shows more flexibility where the interviewer makes sure to keep the interview limited to the actual topic that is related to the research (Sreejesh, Mohapatra, and Anusree, 2014). I kept the interview limited in order to get deeper and detailed information from the participants. That's why I conducted the semi-structured interview. According to Bryman (2012) Semi-structured interviews are also a form of typical interview, however in the semi-structured interviews, the interviewer does have the possibility to change or adapt the question according to the answers given by the interviewee. In semi-structured interviews, the interviewer has pre-pared interview guide in which initial research ideas are more open-ended, and it provides flexibility to emphasize the viewpoints of interviewees on the spot (Bryman, 2016). As it was my first time to take interviews, that's why I focused on a semi-structured interview's guide, so it was mandatory to keep me safe and remind me if I forget something important. In semi-structured interviews, the interviewer prepares an interview guide in advance of time, leaving greater room for early research ideas and flexibility to highlight respondents' points of view as needed. Unstructured interviews are more of conversation and questions are not pre-determine ((Bryman, 2012). I also recorded these interviews on my mobile which were helpful for me in data analysis. According to Berg and Lune (2012), recording the interviews on a gadget makes it easier to code the results for better communication. I also made some notes of important points during interviews.

### **3.4.3 Open Coding method:**

I did analysis through an open coding method. Strauss and Corbin (1990) explained that open coding is "the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing data" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). As I mentioned above, I recorded the interview.



While listening to the interview, I made a rough draft of the interview, then I picked the headings and main points that were relevant to my research topic. Then I was able to present all aspects of the content. According to Bryman (2012), saturation is a status of method coding. He pointed out that this status occurs after the constant comparison between the code of the data and collection of data, which means once a concept or category has been developed, the researchers may continue to collect data to determine the nature and operation but after constant coding, the new data or codes are no longer illuminating about the concept (Bryman, 2012). This step is very important while analyzing the data. I made a comparison between coded data and collection of data then I was able to reach towards the final step and it enhances the validity of the paper.

### **3.5 Ethical aspects:**

My research consisted of informed consent where participants of my research agreed to give an interview after fully understanding the topic. Bryman (2012) emphasizes that it is essential in a social research study to have participants' willingness to be part of the topic. Participants should have free choice about whether they want to participate in the study or not (Bryman, 2012). It is normal for researchers to indicate that respondents' answers will be used for research and that their name will be anonymous if they will. As Bryman, (2012) also stated that it is essential for researchers to maintain the confidentiality of information and anonymity of participants. Before starting the interviews, I informed the participants about recordings and assured them that all their personal information will remain anonymous including their names.

### **3.6 Limitations:**

I found a few limitations while writing this paper. First challenge that I found during my research was the incompleteness of CPEC. As the CPEC project is still ongoing. Therefore, it was difficult for me to observe its positive impacts in terms of cooperation and development respectively. The second issue was the arrangement of participants to conduct interviews. It was not easy to access the people because they felt hesitant to speak openly. Third limitation that I found during the interview was the language barrier because they can't speak English properly. Another major limitation I found was that all of my participants were male. It was difficult to achieve representability in terms of gender distribution. For instance, I did not find any women who could speak. During coding I found that it became a time-intensive process, and this made the analysis complex.

## **Chapter:4 Background:**

Despite being a member of the Western alliance, Pakistan was among the first nations to acknowledge China in 1950. China and Pakistan began to have official diplomatic ties in 1951. The third non-communist nation and the first Muslim country to establish diplomatic ties with China was Pakistan (Arif, K.,1984). The normal diplomatic and political comfortability of this relationship has given way to a comprehensive framework that includes aspects of economics, trade, and defense (Pande, 2011). During the first decade of the 1950s, diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China were founded on geostrategic and geopolitical considerations. However, in the 1960s, this relationship evolved into one of economic cooperation (Hussain, I., Hussain, I., & Qambari, I. H.,2020). Therefore, it may be said that the 1960s marked a turning point in Pakistan-China ties. Both nations expanded their bilateral ties in the political and commercial spheres through several agreements. Moreover, the Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) area and the Pakistani side of Kashmir share a 400-mile border with the Chinese state of Xinjiang in the north. An agreement was signed in December 1962 between Pakistan and China about the location and alignment of their shared border. China was able to end its isolation from the rest of the world because of Pakistan's efforts. China's president, Zhou Enlai, made two trips to Pakistan in response to Pakistan's visits to China in February 1964 and September 1965, highlighting China's growing commitments at a time when tensions on the Kashmir front between Pakistan and India were on the rise. According to him, the Chinese people and leadership are devoted to promoting Pakistan's "national independence, sovereignty, and national integrity" (Pande, 2011).

Although, In the 1980s and 1990s, relations between Pakistan and China expanded in the fields of trade, technology, and defense cooperation, as well as when China increased its support for Pakistan's nuclear program. These developments helped to forge a strategic relationship between the two countries. The future of Pakistan-China relations started to take shape with the opening of Gwadar Port by the Chinese Minister of Communication Li Shenglin on March 20, 2007, and Chinese investments in significant infrastructure projects with a view to establishing One Belt One Road (OBOR) through Pakistan connecting China with West Asia and Africa. Pakistan's importance is highlighted by China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which works with Pakistan on its flagship project, CPEC. The beginning of this Corridor is causing both countries to become more dependent on one another and closer in interaction, creating a network of interdependence (Javed, 2016). Overall, the Sino-Pak relationship is a

crucial strategic partnership for both countries, and it is anticipated that they will continue to work closely together.

#### **4.1 China Pakistan economic corridor:**

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) links China's landlocked autonomous region of Xinjiang to Pakistan's southwest Gwadar Port in Balochistan. It is made up of a collection of multifaceted development initiatives (Rafiq, A., 2017). A 3218-kilometer corridor made up of pipeline networks, motorways, and railroads is to be constructed as part of CPEC (Ebrahim, Z., 2016). When China's Premier Li Keqiang visited Pakistan in May 2013, he originally proposed the idea. However, the formal launch occurred in April 2015. The initial investment, which totals US\$46 billion, is meant to advance Pakistan's infrastructure development, and increase its capacity for energy production. The CPEC project is divided into short-term, medium-term, and long-term projects (Rafiq, A., 2017).

The economic corridor, around which the entire plan is based, is made up of three routes: an eastern route, a central route, and a western route. It runs through the entirety of Pakistan and culminates in a path that connects to the Chinese province of Xinjiang. The main goals of CPEC are the improvement and extension of Pakistan's current road networks. The only route connecting Kashghar in China with three other routes is provided by the Karakoram Highway (Rafiq, A., 2017). The CPEC encompasses three routes through Pakistan. First, the Western Route: This route mainly passes through Gwadar, Turbat, Panjgur, Khuzdar, Kalat, Quetta, Zhob, Dera Ismail Khan, Bannu, Kohat Peshawar, Hasanabdal and onwards to Karakoram Highway. Second, Central Route passes through Gwadar, Turbat, Panjgur, Khuzdar, Larkana, Kashmore, Rajanpur, Dera Ghazi Khan, Dera Ismail Khan, Bannu, Kohat Peshawar, Hasanabdal and onwards to Karakoram Highway. The third route Eastern Route passes through Gwadar, Turbat, Panjgur, Khuzdar, Larkana, Kashmore, Rajanpur, Dera Ghazi Khan, Multan, Faisalabad, Hafiz Abad, Rawalpindi, Hasanabdal and onwards to Karakoram Highway (Nasir et al., 2016).

However, the CPEC is the initiative of China, and in the terms of geostrategic and geo-economic, it will provide many benefits to Pakistan, which I described in the literature Review. Besides this, CPEC has more potential negative aspects to slow down Pakistan's economy. On the other side, Gwadar port can become an economic hub for local people of Pakistan (Ibid).



CPEC highway network source: Government of Pakistan CPEC official Page (GOP, 2017a)

#### 4.2 Gwadar: The crux of CPEC:

As a key component of CPEC, the Gwadar port is being built at Gwadar, Balochistan-Pakistan. The successful operationalization of Gwadar port is crucial to the multi-billion-dollar megaproject CPEC's success. Sea politics are becoming increasingly complex due to the increased emphasis on commercial pursuits and economic development through transit trade fees. Balochistan has recently received attention because of its extensive infrastructure initiative (Farooq, 2019) s. According to Ahmed 2017 the Balouch are living under the poverty line and facing the lack of opportunities to transform their lives. There is a severe lack of infrastructure (Ahmed, 2017). The development of the Gwadar port is of significant strategic and financial importance to Pakistan. It is regarded as Pakistan's third-most important port, behind Karachi and Qasim. It is predicted to have a big impact on trade and cargo transshipment in Pakistan (Farooq, 2019).

Gwadar has enormous potential not just for China and Pakistan, but also for other countries in the region, such as the Middle East, Gulf States, Central Asian Republics, Europe, Turkey, Iran, and Africa. Building the Gwadar port could improve relations between Pakistan and China. However, millions of dollars are being invested by China to boost Pakistan's economy. The port will aid in establishing commercial channels along the coast used by other Arab nations. It is enhancing connectivity and maritime ties between the two nations. The ties between China and Pakistan, as well as the vibrant strength of their cooperation, have been applauded by the Chinese president. Maintaining cordial ties with other Islamic states will ultimately enhance peace and prosperity. Therefore, both countries will be able to establish mutually advantageous relationships in the region (Aslam, M., 2023).

#### **4.2.1 Geographical location of Gwadar Port:**

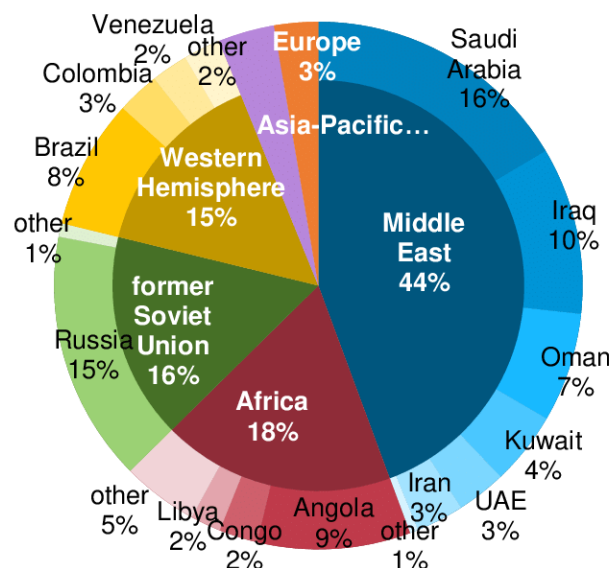
Gwadar port is located at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, adjacent to the Iranian ports of Chabahar and Bander Abbas, the Strait of Hormuz, is about 390 nautical miles away, 234 nautical miles west of Karachi, and 80 kilometres from the Iranian border (Zaheer, 2006). Gwadar, which is situated at the crossroads of international sea shipping and oil trade routes, can serve as Pakistan's international commerce hub. The Middle East, Central Asia, and South Asia would all be connected by the Gwadar port (Ijaz, 2015). Pakistan would be able to explore the CARs' natural resources after establishing the port. It has the ability to change not just Pakistan's economy but the entire region. The corridor would facilitate economic activity where China has already built an economic zone by linking Gwadar and Kashgar. There will be a reduction of more than 4,500 nautical miles in the distance between Shanghai and the major ports in the Gulf. The connection between Kashgar and Gwadar serves as an example of shared destiny. As it is correctly said, China's interest in and involvement in Gwadar cannot be misunderstood because the friendship between China and Pakistan cannot be quantified in terms of dollars and pounds (Farooq, 2019).

#### **4.2.2 Importance of Gwadar Port:**

For China and Pakistan as well as the rest of the region, Gwadar offers immense economic prospects. World trade will soon be drawn to Gwadar. The Central Business District and streets like Marine Drive, Padi Zer Boulevard, Balochistan Broadway, and Jinnah Avenue, which are among the city's most prominent commercial areas, will serve as the principal meeting places for large national and international business organizations, as well as for businesspeople and traders from around the world who operate in a variety of industries. Due to its stunning

undeveloped beaches, marine life, vast open spaces, and closeness to the Gulf, Gwadar is ideally situated to develop into a popular tourist destination. So, China maintains geostrategic and geo economic interests in one of the deepest seaports in the world (Ibid). However, China's security interests were continuously threatened by its incapacity to keep watch over the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean before the building of the port at Gwadar (Sering, 2012). Additionally, Chinese people are conscious of the fact that Pakistan can only provide the shortest and practical entry point to the Arab Gulf. (Ibid.). China places a high importance on security in the Persian Gulf because the country receives roughly 50% of its oil from this region and the other 50% from the rest of the world (Schenker, 2013). The need for energy has compelled Beijing to build the Gwadar port to protect its oil supply from the Persian Gulf and to retain its presence in the Indian Ocean to keep an eye on US and Indian naval actions (Kalim 2017). On the other side, Strengthening Pakistan's military bases close to the Line of Control and enabling its troops and heavy military equipment to enter Ladakh and the Kashmir Valley quickly and even deeply are both made possible by the development of Gwadar port. Forcing Pakistan's army to station in PoK to keep a close eye on enemy activities and increasing its military presence along the Indian border would be very helpful (Sering, 2012).

**China’s Oil Imports by Source, 2019**



**Note: figure composed by author using EIA data.**  
**Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration. (2020).**

Every year, thousands of ships travel through the Straits of Malacca at maximum capacity, carrying almost 85% of China's total crude oil imports through this route (EIA, 2017). China's

ability to travel through the Strait of Malacca in the presence of Indian and US Naval forces was vulnerable before the opening of the Gwadar port (Ibid.). China constantly looks for a different route for its oil supplies when the US is present in the Yellow Sea region in order to avoid any US blockade. Another security issue for China's oil transportation is the presence of piracy near the Strait of Malacca. Other trade shipments may be hampered by these two obstacles, which will have an impact on China's economy. In this context, Sino-Pak economic, strategic, and political interests are interlinked. Gwadar port's overland connection with China's western area presents a foolproof security to China as well as reducing the distance from 16000 to 2500 km (Malik, 2012).

China has three distinct economic regions: the east, the center, and the west. The government's priority has continued to be the development of the country's eastern region, also referred to as the coastline zone, following economic reforms (Saeed, 2011). So, in terms of development and economic advancement, about 60% of China's western area and a portion of its central region remain behind the country's eastern region (Kalim, 2017). Additionally, there is a Uighur movement for self-determination in Xinjiang province which is considered China's largest and least populous region (Malik, 2012). The Chinese "Go West" plan will be helpful for this province since growth and economic activity bring prosperity to the area. Additionally, this circumstance may lessen Uighur separatist movements (Ibid.). China may gain the closest connection to the CARs and Afghanistan by developing industrial zones in this province, which will allow it to meet its energy needs not just in the western portion of the country, but also in many other areas (Ibid.).

China is aiming to purchase LNG from Iran in addition to gaining various benefits from the Gwadar port (Kalim, 2017). The largest shifts in the global LNG trade flows since the start of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine occurred in 2022. LNG was diverted from Asia to Europe and China lost its top spot as the world's largest importer of LNG in 2022, as imports dropped 19.5% year over year to 63.4 million metric tons (Sahu, E. Y., 2023). China was the third-largest LNG importer in the world because of the country's rapidly increasing natural gas consumption before starting the Russia-Ukraine war. This additionally pushed China to speed up the construction of pipeline infrastructure for LNG imports. China continues to import gas in LNG form and through gas pipes to satisfy the demand (EIA, 2014). That is why, China has promoted the construction of the West-to-East Gas Pipeline in 2002 to mitigate energy requirements in the demanding areas. Moreover, these domestic pipelines would also be linked with international pipelines of Central Asia and Iran via Pakistan (Ibid). Gwadar-Xinjiang link

would help Pakistan overcome the gas shortage besides strengthening the country's economy (Gwadar port, 2013). However, CPEC is very valuable in advancing Pakistan and China's economic development.

### **4.3 One belt one road initiative:**

In 2013, the People's Republic of China (PRC) announced its ambitious One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative. The 'Belt & Road' strategy, as it has come to be known, is an umbrella term for China's plans to re-establish both the overland Silk Route Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Route (Robbins, B., 2017). One Belt One Road (OBOR) Initiative is the grand strategy of China to connect Eurasia, Southeast Asia, South Asia and Africa through roads, railway lines, maritime routes, and energy infrastructure. One Belt One Road (OBOR) The land route of the BRI Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) is based upon six land route economic corridors which are China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor (CMREC), Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor(BCIMEC), China-Indochina Peninsula Economic Corridor (CIPEC), China-Central and West Asia Economic Corridor (CCWAEC), (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the new Eurasian Land Bridge (NELB). The Maritime Silk Route based upon the sea route, which connects China with different seaports (Zimmerman, 2015).

The OBOR program is significant because it emphasizes connectivity and cooperation as well as multilateral and transregional outreach. As a result, 65 different countries are directly connected by the BRI (Chin, & He, (2016). The One Belt, One Road (OBOR) program has produced several significant initiatives that will aid in fostering local, regional, and global economic growth in addition to carrying on the legacy of the Old Silk Road. Additionally, it links business communities from a regional and ultra-regional perspective, which ought to be beneficial for all parties involved. Connectivity and cooperation give emerging countries a comparative advantage in the modern economy's competition for customers' business on both price and quality. (Ahmad, 2020). The main goal of OBOR is:

*“It is aimed at promoting orderly and free flow of economic factors, highly efficient allocation of resources and deep integration of markets; encouraging the countries along the Belt and Road to achieve economic policy coordination and carry out broader and more in-depth regional cooperation of higher standards; and jointly creating an open, inclusive and balanced regional economic cooperation architecture that benefits all”* (Tiezzi, 2015).





Source: CPEC Wire (2022), Map of One Belt One Road <https://cpecwire.com/analysis/china-pakistan-economic-corridor-what-is-cpec-faq/>

#### 4.3.1 The Silk Road Economic Belt:

During visits of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Central Asia and Southeast Asia in September and October 2013, suggested that the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road be built jointly. The countries that make up the "belt" are essentially those that are found along the ancient Silk Road, which passed through Central Asia, West Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. By developing infrastructure, fostering greater cultural contacts, and expanding trade, the program aims to unite the area into a single economic space. South Asia and Southeast Asia are apparently included in the extension of this "belt" in addition to this region, which is roughly identical to the ancient Silk Road. Many of the nations that make up this belt are also participants in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which is governed by China. There are suggested belts for the north, center, and south. The northern belt encompasses Russia, Central Asia, and Europe. The Central Belt travels through Central Asia, West Asia, and Central Asia to reach the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean. The South Belt, which begins in China, includes South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Indian Ocean. (Jinchen, 2016).

#### 4.3.2 The Maritime Silk Road:

The Maritime Silk Route, also known as the Maritime Silk Road, was "China's first official international sea trading route." (Zhaoming 2014). A few of the nearby waterways that make up the 21st century Maritime Silk Road (MSR), which aims to finance and promote cooperation between Southeast Asia, Oceania, and North Africa, are the South Pacific Ocean, the South China Sea, and the broader Indian Ocean region. Chinese maritime trade routes must be secured. As an alternative to using the South China Sea and the Strait of Malacca, Gwadar will offer several routes for the shipping of products and oil from the Middle East to China. These two seem to link Africa and the Middle East to sections of Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. CPEC seeks to strengthen diplomatic ties with close allies and make greater strategic use of economics as a tool in China's diplomatic weapons in response to the regional "infrastructure gap"(Xiguang, 2016).

## **Chapter:5 Findings and Discussion:**

### **Introduction**

This chapter defines the findings section. Mainly, I collected findings from secondary sources such as news articles, Pakistani NGOs reports, scholar articles, and with the addition of four interviews. Interpretation plays a vital role in data collection because it is the core of qualitative research. McMillan & Schumacher (2010) explains that interpretation helps to assess, analyze, and explain the empirical data that has been collected. At this phase, different points of views of participants are presented in sufficient detail and depth. However, this helps the reader to do authentic analysis (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Quotations of the participation are included rather than researcher words because it helps to maintain the reliability and validity of the paper.

### **5.1 Findings:**

The study finds that CPEC has positive and negative impacts on the region. However, the positive and negative aspects of CPEC can be seen today based on findings, which come from 4 interviews and through secondary sources. CPEC projects lead to debt and contribute to the Pakistan debt crisis. While the purpose of CPEC is to bring prosperity to the country in terms of improving infrastructure and stimulating economic growth. The CPEC loans have raised concerns about the long-term implication of the debt crisis. Chinese investments, which are largely secretive, are costly. Most Chinese development financing in Pakistan was in the form of loans rather than grants, and it was provided at or near commercial rates. This financial burden hit Pakistani citizens and entrepreneurs badly in terms of high cost of electricity, food prices etc. Pakistan gave Gwadar on lease for 40 years to China because it is not in the condition to return the loan. China's debt trap is seeing a major concern in CPEC related investments.

China Pakistan economic corridor has led to concern about pollution due to the construction of infrastructure, such as roads, ports as well as increased industrial activities along the corridor. During the construction process dust and emission is generated from the machinery that cause air, soil pollution and water pollution. There is an increase in traffic and transportation along corridors that cause air pollution and badly affect the health and local ecosystem.

Balochistan is Pakistan's largest province in terms of geographical size. Even though it is rich in mineral resources, Balochis were marginalized through CPEC. Baloch people are ignored for jobs, education, decision-making process, and infrastructure development. They are becoming a minority in their own land due to unfair distribution of the resources. CPEC is considered a game changer for the entire region, but it is only beneficial for the province of Punjab and its people in terms of development projects, jobs, and economic development. The fair distribution of CPEC projects encourages the people to participate in the progress of these projects.

### **5.1.1 Infrastructure development:**

It has been observed during field study, the situation of infrastructure of the country has been changed. A male participant who was a student at university of the Punjab said, *“CPEC focuses on the construction of highways, railways, and pipelines. This development will significantly enhance Pakistan's transportation infrastructure, enabling the efficient movement of goods, reducing transit times, and improving connectivity within the country. Upgraded infrastructure facilitates economic activities, trade, and investment by providing reliable and smooth transportation networks.”*

According to an advocate of the High court, *“CPEC includes energy projects such as power plants, transmission lines, and renewable energy initiatives. Pakistan has been grappling with energy shortages, which have hindered industrial growth and economic development. The energy infrastructure under CPEC addresses this issue, providing a more stable and reliable power supply. Access to affordable and abundant energy supports industrialization, boosts productivity, and attracts investment, thus stimulating overall infrastructure development.”*

Another male participant added, *“Gwadar Port, a centerpiece of CPEC, is strategically located near the Arabian Sea. The development of this deep-sea port involves the construction of docks, terminals, and associated infrastructure. Gwadar Port serves as a crucial trade link for regional and international connectivity, facilitating maritime trade and providing opportunities for infrastructure expansion in and around the port area.”*

A policeman mentioned, *“CPEC aims to establish special economic zones (SEZs) along the corridor. These zones offer a conducive environment for business and industrial activities, with infrastructure tailored to support manufacturing and trade. The development of SEZs includes*

*infrastructure such as industrial estates, roads, utilities, and connectivity to ports. These zones attract domestic and foreign investment, promoting industrial growth and job creation while boosting overall infrastructure development.”*

### **5.1.2 Flow of Trade:**

When I asked the participants about the flow of trade, they said that CPEC holds great potential for enhancing trade between China and Pakistan, as well as with other regional economies. According to the student, *“CPEC has the potential to enhance regional connectivity beyond China and Pakistan. The project envisions extending transportation infrastructure into neighboring countries such as Afghanistan and Central Asian states, creating a network of trade routes. This connectivity can facilitate regional trade integration and open up new markets for goods and services.”*

A policeman added, *“CPEC includes energy projects aimed at addressing Pakistan's energy shortages. The development of power plants and transmission lines will contribute to a more stable energy supply, reducing production costs for industries and businesses. This can increase the competitiveness of Pakistani products in the global market and stimulate trade.”*

An Advocate of the High court mentioned, *“The development of Gwadar Port, a deep-sea port in southwestern Pakistan, is a central component of CPEC. Gwadar Port provides China with a strategically important route to the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean, offering shorter and more efficient access to international markets. This facilitates China's trade by bypassing longer and congested routes through the Strait of Malacca.”*

A male participant said, *“CPEC is very helpful for the flow of trade through roads, rails, and air transport. CPEC is the project that connects the regions like Afghanistan and Iran. This is helpful in bringing prosperity in the region.”*

### **5.1.3 Job opportunities:**

It has been observed during the course of field study that The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is expected to bring various economic benefits to both China and Pakistan, including job creation. An advocate of the High court said, *“CPEC has the potential to create numerous job opportunities in Pakistan. The project involves the construction of roads,*

railways, power plants, industrial zones, and other infrastructure projects. These initiatives require a large workforce, which can lead to employment opportunities in construction, engineering, transportation, logistics, manufacturing, and related sectors.” According to the international labor organization (ILO), CPEC is estimated to create 400,000 jobs in the country, while according to the estimates of Applied Economic Research Centre, the mega-initiative would provide around 700,000 direct jobs between 2015 and 2030. The Planning Commission’s data shows even more promising results, with CPEC generating around 800,000 jobs in the next 15 years (M.M.Zia, 2019). Dr Shahid Rashid (2018) highlighted that infrastructure of roads has created 51,580 jobs which include Pakistani and Chinese nationals. However, out of the total number being used only 3,780 are Chinese and the remaining 47,800 are Pakistani (Dr Shahid Rashid, 2018).

According to the policeman, “CPEC focuses on energy projects, including the development of power plants and transmission lines. The addition of new energy sources can address Pakistan's energy deficit and provide a more reliable power supply. This, in turn, can support existing industries and encourage the establishment of new businesses, which can lead to job creation in the energy sector and its associated industries.”

A male student added, “The development of industrial zones and special economic zones under CPEC is expected to attract foreign and domestic investment. This investment can stimulate economic activities, leading to the establishment of new industries, businesses, and enterprises. As a result, more jobs can be generated across various sectors, including manufacturing, services, and trade.”

A male participant mentioned, “CPEC aims to promote connectivity and trade between China, Pakistan, and other regional countries. Improved transportation infrastructure and trade facilitation measures can enhance cross-border trade, leading to increased economic activity and job opportunities in sectors such as transportation, logistics, warehousing, and trade services.”

#### **5.1.4 Change in the latest political scenario:**

It has been observed during the field study that CPEC has the potential to change Pakistan’s politics by fostering economic development, promoting regional connectivity, improving infrastructure, strengthening diplomatic relations, and enhancing political stability. A policeman explained, “CPEC is not just limited to China and Pakistan but also envisions

*connectivity with other countries in the region. The improved transportation infrastructure, such as roads, railways, and ports, can facilitate regional trade and connectivity. Enhanced regional integration can lead to improved political relations, increased cooperation, and a more stable regional environment.”*

A male participant included, *“CPEC aims to improve Pakistan's economic infrastructure, promote industrialization, enhance energy production, and boost trade and investment. A stronger economy can have a positive impact on the political stability of a country, as it can provide resources for development, address socio-economic issues, and reduce poverty and inequality. This, in turn, can contribute to a more stable political environment.”*

An advocate mentioned, *“CPEC holds significant geostrategic importance for China, Pakistan, and other regional powers. It strengthens China's access to the Arabian Sea, providing an alternative trade route to the Strait of Malacca and reducing its dependence on the South China Sea. For Pakistan, it brings investments, economic opportunities, and increased strategic ties with China. These geostrategic considerations can influence the political dynamics of the region and potentially lead to shifts in alliances and cooperation patterns.”*

*A male student said, “CPEC includes the development of infrastructure projects in less developed regions of Pakistan, such as Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. By addressing regional disparities and promoting inclusive development, CPEC can help alleviate socio-economic grievances and reduce tensions within the country. This can contribute to a more stable and harmonious political environment.”* In 2023 the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) raise the voice with the collaboration of Baloch Students Organisation and submit a report to the United Nation bringing its attention to the ongoing rights violations suffered by the Baloch people in Pakistan as a result of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) agreement. The report highlighted the Pakistan and Peoples Republic of China (PRC) governments repression and neglect of the Baloch community, and general failure to involve local communities in the decision-making process surrounding the development project and about the fate of their homeland and depriving them of institutional mechanisms to address their grievances. Moreover, The Baloch people including political activists, journalists, and students have been killed and disappeared due to opposition to the CPEC project and spoken out against the government's policies towards the project (UNPO, 2023).

### **5.1.5 Exchange cultural values:**

When I asked about the exchange of cultural values, they explained that cultural exchange refers to mutual sharing of customs, ideas, art, and other aspects of culture between different countries. It fosters understanding and cooperation between different countries. A male participant illustrated, *“CPEC involves the movement of people, goods, and ideas between China and Pakistan. Increased connectivity through improved transportation infrastructure can facilitate the exchange of cultural practices, traditions, and experiences. This can lead to a better understanding and appreciation of each other's cultures, fostering cultural dialogue and cooperation.”*

A policeman said, *“CPEC's development includes the promotion of tourism and the preservation of cultural heritage sites. Tourism can bring people from different backgrounds together, allowing them to experience and learn about each other's cultures first hand. Moreover, the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage can highlight the rich history and traditions of both countries, creating opportunities for cultural exchange and appreciation.”*

A male student mentioned, *“CPEC encourages academic and research collaborations between Chinese and Pakistani universities and institutes. Such exchanges can promote the sharing of knowledge, ideas, and cultural perspectives. Students, researchers, and scholars can engage in cultural exchanges, participate in joint projects, and develop a deeper understanding of each other's cultures, fostering mutual respect and cultural enrichment.”*

An advocate of the high court added, *“CPEC's focus on connectivity and trade can lead to increased interaction between Chinese and Pakistani communities. This can happen through business partnerships, labour exchanges, and community engagements. Such interactions create opportunities for cultural understanding, language exchange, and the appreciation of shared values and traditions.”*

## **5.2 Discussion:**

This thesis provides an analysis of the Socio-Political and economic impacts of CPEC cooperation in the region. In the above sections, the study provided the positive and negative impacts of CPEC on the local public. This research paper also argued three different theories



in the context of CPEC cooperation and how it will bring changes to the region. The realist sees cooperation as a pragmatic tool that states use to enhance their relative power and advance their interest in an anarchic system. According to realists' cooperation can occur among the states, but they see it as inherently self-interested and motivated by more security and power. Liberal argues that cooperation is essential for promoting peace, prosperity, and stability and fostering economic interdependence among states. They insist on avoiding war and solving their problem through negotiation. They believe that cooperation is dependent on shared values, norms, and institutions. Constructivists highlighted that cooperation is a socially constructed phenomenon that emerged from shared identities and norms among the states. They believe that cooperation occurs when they perceive themselves and others as belonging to the same community with shared values, identities, understandings, and beliefs. In the case of CPEC, cooperation is a significant component that helps Pakistan foster its position economically. CPEC is the platform through which Pakistan can improve the lives of local people.

### **5.2.1 CPEC and Cooperation (positive impacts):**

The CPEC project has a significant capability to impact positively in the region with the help of cooperation. CPEC has the main contribution in developing jobs and reducing poverty among the people of Pakistan. CPEC is not considered a construction spree, it's a job creation engine. The construction activities need significant workforce including construction work, labour force, engineer, architects, plumbers, and electricians etc. Within CPEC projects, local people have great opportunities in finding jobs in both skilled and unskilled roles. Additionally, CPEC promotes industrial cooperation between Pakistan and China, including the establishment of special economic zones (SEZs). Within a predetermined geographic area, the special economic zones attract the investors, promote export, and create more jobs for the residents. The special economic zones comprise nine projects which are textiles, Engineering, Electrical & Electronic, Chemical & Paints, Food Processing, Pharmaceuticals, Automobiles, Packaging, Building Material. The article written by Yasir Habib khan (2024) who is president of institute of international relations and media research highlighted that inauguration of Gwadar international airport is expected in 2024. This airport consists of 4300 acres and boasts a runway accommodating large aircraft and a modern terminal building with an estimated cost of \$246 million. It is also a great opportunity for employment for the local people (Yasir Habib khan, 2024).



**Source: CPIC, (2023): New Gwadar international airport expected to be functional**  
<https://www.cpicglobal.com/new-gwadar-international-airport-expected-to-be-functional-by-september-2023/>

Economic and industrial development are fundamental components to change the destiny of any country. Economic and industries can be increased through cooperation. However, with the help of CPEC cooperation the economic and industrial growth of Pakistan has been changed. CPEC projects play a vital role in highlighting the infrastructure deficiencies, energy shortage, and fewer health facilities in Pakistan. CPEC has positive impacts on the local population by changing domestic infrastructure of roads, building new schools and hospitals. Yasir Habib khan (2024) explained that advancing the country's academic infrastructure is exemplified by the establishment of smart classrooms for higher education. Additionally, 50 schools are targeted for maintenance in improving education facilities (Yasir Habib khan, 2024). On the other hand, progress is expected in the healthcare sector by providing medical equipment and material, along with the Gwadar hospital project (Yasir Habib khan, 2024). Pak-China Friendship Hospital Gwadar has been completed at the cost of \$100 million with the financing of the Chinese government. It is spanning over 68 acres of land, the 300-bed hospital has six blocks that include medical block, residential block, nursing block, paramedical institute block, medical college block, central laboratory block with incorporation of other allied facilities, medical equipment, and machinery (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, 2023). The purpose of the hospital is to provide free and high-quality treatment for residents. Moreover, it is the source of employment for local people.



**Source: The Nation, 2023: pak-china friendship hospital transforms gwadar healthcare landscape** <https://www.nation.com.pk/20-Dec-2023/pak-china-friendship-hospital-transforms-gwadar-healthcare-landscape>

CPEC enhances trade and investments by providing better connectivity among the regions. Increased trade leads to economic growth because it opens the door for investors. It is the cooperation of both countries through which Pakistan becomes able to boost its economy and industrial growth. CPEC creates an environment for the investors by incentives such as infrastructure support, tax breaks. Joint ventures between Chinese and Pakistani firms bring technology transfers, new skills, and access to new markets. This cooperation boosts Pakistan's industrial capacity. CPEC provides an opportunity to expand trade by reducing the costs of land transportation. According to the State bank of Pakistan, in 2023 Pakistan's export will increase by 40.01% (\$1481.1499 million) to China (CPIC, 2024).

Culture refers to the groups within society or ways of life that consist of how people marry, dress, religious ceremonies, customs, language, and their patterns of work. The exchange of culture among the countries is a model of strong relations. CPEC promotes interaction between China and Pakistan due to investors, influx of Chinese workers in Pakistan. This exchange fosters friendship, cultural understanding, and mutual respect. To foster more bilateral ties, cultural events, exhibitions are organized between Pakistan and China. These events show the rich culture of both countries such as art, films, dance, music, cuisine, and traditions. Pakistan announced to promote culture exchange by establishing a Chinese cultural center and some packages announced in CPEC such projects like International Documentary Channel, CCTV

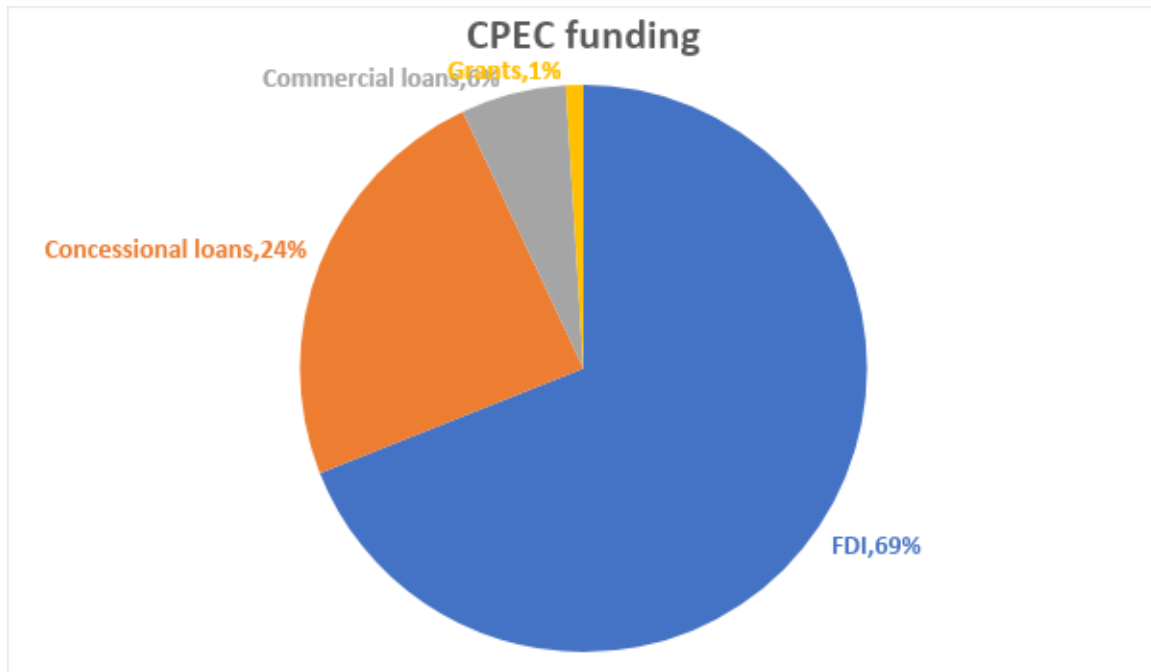
English News Channel, and Pak-China Joint National Research Centre, Small sized Hydro Power Technology in Pakistan (Asif et al., 2021). Additionally, Chinese workers who are involved in CPEC projects marry Pakistani women and live in Pakistan. This is the new bond of culture between both nations. CPEC has greater influence on both countries regarding cultural exchange. Media has the power to influence how Pakistanis perceive and understand Chinese culture, language and it brings close to the culture, people, and nations. Over time, these interactions can contribute to the construction of a shared culture and identity between Pakistan and China. Entertainment industries of both countries make more cultural ties in the field of television, film, and artistic change between Pakistan and China (Daily Times, 2019).

CPEC has the potential to bring change in the political system in Pakistan through influencing government policies, priorities, regional dynamics, and foreign relations. CPEC has become a hot topic about its benefits, challenges, and implications for nation sovereignty in Pakistan. The public opinion and political discourses may change government decision making and policy formation. Moreover, CPEC aims to promote balanced regional development in Pakistan by connecting less developed regions. This can influence the political dynamics by elaborating the disparities of the regions. Through this, politicians participate actively in any development project. During the interview I found that CPEC can influence the foreign policy of Pakistan. This cooperation may lead to adjustment in Pakistan foreign relations such as with India and Afghanistan. Peace in the region increases more economic activities.

### **5.2.2 CPEC and cooperation (negative impacts):**

CPEC is a mega economic project, estimated cost is US\$62 Billion (Abbas, 2019). It is considered a new debt trap for Pakistan, specifically those associated with CPEC projects. Pakistan has borrowed significant sums from China for infrastructural development. This raised a question about the ability to repay these loans. Because these loans have an interest rate and repayment period which could exacerbate its debt burden and then lead towards a debt trap situation. About this concern, the state bank of Pakistan has disclosed that Pakistan must repay foreign debt amounting \$27.47 billion by the year of 2024. This repayment includes both the principal loan and interest rate (saddiqui, 2024). Due to the high burden of debt, the local people are facing high inflation problems. Debt unsustainability badly affects the living standard of the public. A journalist Syed Fazal-e-Haider (2023) illustrated that local people are worried about economic turmoil in Pakistan. In June inflation increased to 29.4% with food

prices up by 40% and transport costs by 20 per cent. Due to inflation the poverty ratio is also increased which is forecast to be 37.2 per cent (Syed Fazl-e-Haider, 2023). CPEC projects make the locals more terrible because locals are struggling to afford the high electricity prices due to high fuel prices.



**Source: CPEC Wire (2020): CHINA PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDORE DEBT TRAP OR GAME CHANGER** <https://cpecwire.com/analysis/china-pakistan-economic-corridor-what-is-cpec-faq/>

CPEC, a component of China's One Belt One Road initiative, would provide a new economic route connecting the deep seaport of Gwadar in Balochistan with Kashgar in Western China. It is an illustration of a contemporary Silk Road. It creates insecurity among the people of Balochistan in terms of marginalization. The Balochi is struggling, and their lives are becoming miserable every day due to CPEC. The construction of CPEC related projects in Balochistan often involves acquiring land which is the result of displacement of people of Balochistan and disruption of their lives badly. This is leading to grievances among the affected people due to different reasons. Most Balochi are fish folk. They have no alternative source of income, compelling them to sell their lands etc. Increase in population from other cities and from China due to development projects is increasing insecurity regarding their lands. Due to displacement the Balochi will become jobless and then cause social stress and psychological trauma among the affected people. They are not able to buy new lands due to the high cost of land and get new jobs immediately. According to the report of the World Commission on Dams, the

financial compensation is unequal and insufficient to replace the resources that the community lost because of the relocation and the loss of land (Abbas, 2019).

CPEC is an initiative that consists of energy, infrastructure, and other development projects in Pakistan. However, CPEC has direct diverse effects on air, water, and biodiversity in Pakistan. It enhances climate change vulnerabilities for the faltering economy of Pakistan due to its environmental risks. Its major environmental concerns are related to energy projects that are generated from traditional coal-fired power plants. These power plants are the major contributors of CO<sub>2</sub> and smog which lead to climate change and global warming. The second environmental risk is tree cuttings during the construction process. CO<sub>2</sub> emits during tree cutting for the road networks. The CPEC projects' infrastructure development and construction activity cause deforestation, biodiversity loss, soil erosion, and increased flood risk in the area. Vehicle trafficking is also a threat for the environment of Pakistan because it is the major contributor of CO<sub>2</sub> emission. It is anticipated that up to 7000 trucks per day use the Karakoram Highway, releasing up to 36.5 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> (Kouser et al., 2020).

## **Chapter:6 Conclusion and recommendation:**

The aim of this research paper is to explore socio-economic and political aspects of CPEC with the cooperation of both countries. Economic corridors are basically trade agreements that foster economic cooperation between two or more countries. In this thesis the concept of cooperation is explained in two ways that are positive and negative aspects of CPEC in the region. The positive aspects consist of job opportunities, trade, economic growth, agriculture development, energy, and infrastructure. This mutual integration between China and Pakistan will help to enhance the economy of Pakistan. Gwadar port that is the crux of the CPEC, has the potential to become a hub of economic activities. It provides easy and short access for trade activities, for more energy resources between China and the Middle East, Africa, and Europe.

Instead of having positive aspects, CPEC badly affected the people of Pakistan. Land occupation, debt trap, and pollution are included in negative aspects of CPEC cooperation. Through cooperation the migration process becomes easy between two countries, but it leaves a bad impression on the local people. Balochistan is affected badly through this cooperation. The Baloch are afraid that they are colonized by the Chinese. They are forced to sell their land and leave that place. They have no other choice and can't speak in the decision-making process regarding any development projects. It is the cooperation between Pakistan that enhances the environmental risks. CPEC is based on construction work that is the big emission of carbon dioxide that is not good for the health of local communities. Due to CPEC Pakistan is facing a debt issue also. Due to this problem the inflation ratio is becoming high and that affects the lives of local people. The CPEC projects have multiple positive and negative aspects for Pakistan that give the opportunity of new steps to enhance the economic position.

### **Recommendation:**

In this section, I suggest some recommendations for the new researcher on the same topic in the future. These suggestions will be helpful to overcome the challenges which are coming through CPEC projects. It can be helpful in developing more trust and cooperation between China and Pakistan through eliminating the hinders. These observations are based on this study which I found during field study.

CPEC still in ongoing process and have more time to complete the development projects in the region. However, it is early to finalize any argument about its positive and negative impacts in the region. Even though this study findings and discussion present a clear picture of how CPEC cooperation brings prosperity in the region. But there are some more points which need more work in the future which are transparency and accountability, political instability, environmental issues, and security issues.

To make CPEC beneficial, it is necessary that the government of Pakistan should introduce different programs which highlight and train the workers how to clean the environment. Government should provide an equal share of CPEC in all provinces.



## References:

- Arif, K. (1984). Documents on China-Pakistan Relations. Lahore: Vanguard.
- Axelrod, R. (1984). THE EVOLUTION OF COOPERATION, New York: Basic books.
- ATKINSON, R. & FLINT, J. 2001. Accessing hidden and hard-to-reach populations: Snowball research strategies. Social research update, 33, 1-4.
- Agénor, P.-R., & Moreno-Dodson, B. (2006). Public infrastructure and growth: New channels and policy implications: The World Bank.
- Arroyo, J.C.T., 2008. Cooperação econômica versus competitividade social. Katálysis, Florianópolis 11(1): 73-83.
- Asomani-Boateng, R., Fricano, R. J., & Adarkwa, F. (2015). Assessing the socio-economic impacts of rural road improvements in Ghana: A case study of transport sector program support (II). Case studies on transport policy, 3(4), 355-366.
- Ahmed, R., & Mustafa, U. (2016). Impact of CPEC projects on agriculture sector of Pakistan: Infrastructure and agricultural output linkages. The Pakistan Development Review, 511- 527. BBC (22.4.2015), Is China-Pakistan 'silk road' a game-changer? <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-32400091>.
- Ahmad, S. I. (2017). CPEC is not a game-changer, it's game over. The News International.
- Ahmed, M., & Baloch, A. (2017). The political economy of development: A critical assessment of Balochistan, Pakistan.
- Ameen, B., & Kamran, A. (2017). CPEC: Impact of China-Pakistan economic corridor (CPEC) on China's import and export in terms of transit time and shipping cost. Journal of Business Administration and Management Sciences, 1(2), 84-99.
- Ahmed, Z. S. (2018). Impact of the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor on Nation-Building in Pakistan. Journal of Contemporary China, 1-15.
- Arshad, M. (2018). Pakistan Observer. Pakistan Youngest country in the world with 64% population below 30. Retrieved March 25th, 2019, from: <https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-youngest-country-in-the-world-with-64-population-below-30/>.
- Abbas, K. (2019). Socio-economic impacts of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) at community level: case study of Gwadar Pakistan (master's thesis, Universitetet i Agder; University of Agder).
- Ahmad, B. (2020). Belt and Road Initiative: Misgivings and Resolve. China's Belt and Road Initiative in a Global Context: Volume II: The China Pakistan Economic Corridor and its Implications for Business, 181-202.

- Allauddin, Liu, H., & Ahmed, R. Q. (2020). The changing dynamics and new developments of China–Pakistan relations. *India Quarterly*, 76(1), 73-88.
- Asif, M., Ali, M., M'Begniga, A., Guoqing, Z., Yang, L., & Hashim, M. (2021). China-Pakistan economic corridor: analytical overview on socio-cultural romance between China and Pakistan. *RandwickInternational of Social Science Journal*, 2(4), 492-508.
- Aslam, M. (2023). Gwadar Port: Importance in Economic Development of Pakistan. <https://www.graana.com/blog/gwadar-port-importance-in-economic-development-of-pakistan/>.
- Benzaquen, J.F., 2006. A socialização para cooperação: uma análise de práticas de educação não-formal. *Revista do Programa de Pós-Graduação Higher Education. em Sociologia da UFPE, Recife*, 2(1): 79-97.
- Boyce, C. & Neale, P. (2006). *Conducting In-depth interviews: A Guide for Designing and Conducting In-depth Interviews for Evaluation Input*.
- BEHRAVESH, M. (2011). *Constructivism: An Introduction*. Retrieved from: <https://www.eir.info/2011/02/03/constructivism-an-introduction/>.
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods*, 4th edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- BBC. (22.4.2015). Is China-Pakistan 'silk road' a game-changer? <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-32400091>.
- Butt, K. M., & Butt, A. A. (2015). Impact of CPEC on regional and extra-regional actors. *The journal of political science*, 33, 23.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods: Oxford university press*.
- Bhatti, M. N., Mustafa, G., & Ahmad, F. (2020). China Pakistan Economic Corridor: Prospects and Challenges. *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, 4(1), 292-305.
- Chomsky, N. (1999). *Profit Over People: Neoliberalism and the Global Order*. New York: Seven Stories Press.
- Christiansen, T., Jorgensen, K. E., & Wiener, A. (1999). The social construction of Europe. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 6(4), 528-544.
- Callinicos, A. (2003). *An Anti-Capitalist Manifesto*. Blackwell Publishing.
- Calderon, C. A., & Servén, L. (2004). The effects of infrastructure development on growth and income distribution. Available at SSRN 625277.
- Chebakova, A. (2008). Theorizing the EU as a global actor: a constructivist approach. In *The Maturing European Union–ECSA-Canada Biennial Conference Paper* (pp. 1-16).
- Chang, H.-J. (2010). *23 Things They Don't Tell You About Capitalism*. Penguin Books.

- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- CPEC. (2019). *CPEC and Pakistani economy: an appraisal*. CPEC Center of Excellence, Islamabad.
- CPEC Secretariat. (2023). *Introduction/ China-Pakistan Economic Corridor*. Retrieved from: <https://cpec.gov.pk/introduction/1>.
- China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. (2023). *Pak-China Friendship Hospital to be opened today*. retrieved from: <https://cpecinfo.com/pak-china-friendship-hospital-to-be-opened-today/>.
- CPIC. (2024). *PAKISTAN'S EXPORTS TO CHINA SURGE BY 40%: A SIGN OF STRENGTHENING TRADE TIES*.RETRIVED by: <https://www.cpicglobal.com/pakistans-exports-to-china-surge-by-40-a-sign-of-strengthening-trade-ties/#:~:text=According%20to%20SBP%20data%2C%20Pakistan's,sustained%20momentum%20in%20trade%20activity>.
- Deutsch, K. W., Kann, R. A., Lichterman, M. et al. (1957). *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Deng, A., Yeo, A., & Du, L. (2018). *A Study on Gwadar Port International Competitiveness Using Porter's Diamond Model*. *World Journal of Innovative Research*, 4(1), 1-7.
- Daily Times (2019). *CPEC is a key to cultural relations between China and Pakistan*. [online] Available at: <https://dailytimes.com.pk/369142/cpec-is-a-key-to-cultural-relations-between-china-and-pakistan/> [Accessed 20 Sep. 2019].
- Egan, M., Nugent, N., & Paterson, W. E. (2010). *Introduction: Researching the European Union*. *Research Agendas in EU Studies: Stalking the Elephant*, 1-13.
- Ebrahim, Z. (2016). *China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: A boon for the economy, a bane for locals*. Retrieved from Dawn: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1236159>.
- EIA. (2017). *THE STRAIT OF MALACCA, A KEY OIL TRADE CHECKPOINT, LINK THE INDIAN AND PACIFIC OCEAN*. Retrieved from: <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=32452>.
- Fatima, U., & Nasim, A. (2019). *Cost of Electricity Generation in Pakistan–Comparison of Levelized Cost of Electricity of CPEC Coal Plants with Oil and Natural Gas Based Plants Commissioned in 2010-14*.
- Farooq, U. (2019). *CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR: IMPACT ON INDO-PAK RELATIONS*. [http://pr.hec.gov.pk/jspui/bitstream/123456789/15849/1/Umar%20Farooq\\_South%20Asian%20Std\\_2019\\_UoPunjab\\_PRR.pdf](http://pr.hec.gov.pk/jspui/bitstream/123456789/15849/1/Umar%20Farooq_South%20Asian%20Std_2019_UoPunjab_PRR.pdf).

- Fazal-e-haider, S. (2023). China's big gamble in Pakistan: A 10-year scorecard for CPEC. retrieved from: <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/china-s-big-gamble-pakistan-10-year-scorecard-cpec>.
- Glaser, C. L. (2010). *Rational theory of international politics: the logic of competition and cooperation*: Princeton University Press.
- Grint, K., & Nixon, D. (2015). *The Sociology of Work*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Haas, E.B. (1958). *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social and Economic Forces 1950–1957*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Holsti, K.J. (1988). *International Politic, Analysis Framework*. Edition Ii. Translate By M. Tahir Azhari. Jakarta. Publisher Erlangga.
- Hopf, T. (1998). The promise of constructivism in international relations theory. *International security*, 23(1), 171-200.
- Hartwell, C. (2001), *The Case Against Capital Controls: Financial Flows, Crises, and the Flit Side of the Free-Trade Argument*, Policy Analysis No. 303 14th of June, Washington, D.C.: Cato Institute, pp. 1-20.
- Hal, M. S. (2015). Benefits from CPEC. *Pakistan Today*.
- Husain, K. 2017b. "CPEC Cost Build-Up." *Dawn*, December 15. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1302328>.
- Hussain, I., Hussain, I., & Qambari, I. H. (2020). History of Pakistan–China relations: the complex interdependence theory. *The Chinese Historical Review*, 27(2), 146-164.
- Javed U. (2016). Assessing CPEC: Potential threats and prospects. *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, 53(2), 1–16.
- Ijaz, A. (2015). Significance of Gwadar Port.
- Ishaq, M., Ping, RJ, & Ahmed, B. (2017). Pakistan-China economic corridor (CPEC): opportunities, threats and challenges. *International Affairs and Global Strategy*, 52 (9), 9-16.
- Iqbal, K. (2018). *Securing CPEC: Challenges, responses and outcomes Securing the belt and road initiative* (pp. 197-214): Springer.
- Jervis, R. (1999). Realism, neoliberalism, and cooperation: understanding the debate. *International Security*, 24 (1): 42-63.
- Johnson, B. & Christensen, L. (2004). *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Approaches*. 2nd ed., Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Jackson, R. & Sørensen, G. (2013). *Introduction to international relations: theories and approaches*: Oxford University Press.

- Javaid, U. (2016). Assessing CPEC: potential threats and prospects. *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, 53(2).
- Jinchen, T. (2016). "One Belt and One Road": Connecting China and the world | McKinsey & Company. Retrieved from <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/capital-projects-and-infrastructure/our-insights/one-belt-and-one-road-connecting-china-and-the-world>.
- Kindleberger, C. (1973). *World in Depression*. Berkeley.
- Keohane, R. O. and Nye, J. S. (1975). 'International Interdependence and Integration', in F. Greenstein and N. Polsby (eds), *Handbook of Political Science*, viii: International Politics. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 363–414.
- Keohane, R. O. (1984). *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Keohane, R. O. (2011). International institutions: Can interdependence work? In Art., R. J. J., R. (ed.) vol. 10 *International politics: enduring concepts and contemporary issues*, pp. 150-157. Boston: Longman.
- Kalim, I. (2017). China Pakistan Economic Corridor—A geo-economic masterstroke of China. *South Asian Studies*, 32(2), 461-475.
- Khursheed, A., Haider, S. K., Mustafa, F., & Akhtar, A. (2019). China–Pakistan economic corridor: a harbinger of economic prosperity and regional peace. *Asian Journal of German and European Studies*, 4(1), 1-15.
- Kouser, S., Subhan, A., & Abedullah. (2020). Uncovering Pakistan's environmental risks and remedies under the China-Pakistan economic corridor. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, 27, 4661-4663.
- Khan, Y. H. (2024). CPEC set to maintain gamechanger status in 2024, analyst says. retrieved from: <https://cpecinfo.com/cpec-set-to-maintain-gamechanger-status-in-2024-analyst-says/>.
- Lamy, S. L. (2011). Contemporary mainstream approaches: neo-realism and neo-liberalism. In Baylis, J., S. S. O. P. (ed.) vol. 5 *The globalization of world politics: An introduction to international relations*, pp. 114-129. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mearsheimer, J. J. (2001). *The tragedy of great power politics*: WW Norton & Company.
- McPherson, M. Smith-Lovin, L., & Cook, J. M. (2001). Birds of a feather: Homophily in social networks. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 27(1), 415–444.
- McMillan, J.H. and Schumacher, S., 2010. *Research in Education: Evidence-Based Inquiry*, MyEducationLab Series. Pearson.
- Malik, H. Y. (2012). Strategic importance of Gwadar port. *Journal of Political Studies*, vol. 19, issue, 2, pp. 57-69.

- Malik, A. R. (2018). The China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): a game changer for Pakistan’s economy. *China's global rebalancing and the New Silk Road*, 69-83.
- M.M.Zia. (2019). Pakistan Observer: Job Creation under CPEC. Retrieved from: <https://gwadarpro.pk/2080/pakistan-observer-job-creation-under-cpec>.
- Njinkeu, D., Wilson, J. S., & Fosso, B. P. (2008). Expanding trade within Africa: The impact of trade facilitation. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, (4790).
- Nawijn, J., & Mitas, O. (2012). Resident attitudes to tourism and their effect on subjective well-being: The case of Palma de Mallorca. *Journal of Travel Research*, 51(5), 531–541.
- Nasir, Z. M., Shah, S. Z. A., & Ahmed, H. (2016). Cost and benefit analysis of the four routs of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). *The Pakistan Development Review*, 553-559.
- Oye, K. A. (1985). Explaining cooperation under anarchy: Hypotheses and strategies. *World politics*, 38(1), 1-24.
- Oye, K. A. (2015). The mitigation of Anarchy: The conditions for cooperation in world politics. In Jervis, R. A., R. J. (ed.) vol. 12 *International politics: enduring concepts and contemporary issues*, pp. 67-79. New Jersey: Pearson Higher Ed.
- Onuf, N. G. (2023). World-making, State-building (2014). In *International Theory at the Margins* (pp. 193-212). Bristol University Press.
- Patton, M.Q. (1999). Enhancing the quality and credibility of qualitative analysis. *Health Sciences Research*, 34, 1189–1208.
- Pande A. (2011). *Explaining Pakistan’s foreign policy: Escaping India*. London: Routledge. Crossref.
- Qadri, S., Habib, M., & Salim, M. (2023). CPEC: Challenges, Opportunities and Socio-Economic Impact on The Muslim World. *International Journal of Social Science & Entrepreneurship*, 3(3), 257-271.
- Ragin, C. C. (1994). *Constructing social research*. SAGE Publications.
- Rynning, S., & Guzzini, S. (2001). *Realism and Foreign Policy Analysis*. Copenhagen: Copenhagen Peace Research Institute.
- Reus–Smit, C. (2002). Imagining society: constructivism and the English School. *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, 4(3), 487-509.
- Risse, T. (2004). *Social constructivism and European integration*.
- Raza, S. A., Ali, Y., & Mehboob, F. (2012). *Role of agriculture in economic growth of Pakistan*.

- Rafiq, A. (2017). *The China Pakistan Economic Corridor: Barriers and Impacts*. Peaceworks (Washington DC: United States Institute for Peace, 2017).
- Robbins, B. (2017). *One Belt, One Road and the History of the Maritime Silk Route*. E-International Relations Studies.
- Rashid, S., Zia, M., & Waqar, S. (2018). Employment outlook of China Pakistan economic corridor: A meta-analysis. *Centre of Excellence for CPEC*, 2(01), 1-20.
- Rehman, A. U., Hakim, A., Khan, K., & Khan, I. U. (2018). Role of CPEC in development of trade, transport and economy of Pakistan. *Romanian Journal of Transport Infrastructure*, 7(1), 77-92.
- Rozanov, A., Ivanchenko, M., Baranova, A., Antonova, E. N., Smirnov, M., Belyaeva, O., ... & Bessonov, A. (2020). *Approaches to Analysis of Interstate Cooperation*. In Education, Human Rights and Peace in Sustainable Development. IntechOpen.
- Strauss, A., and Corbin, J. M. (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Searle, J. R. (1995). *The construction of social reality*. Simon and Schuster.
- Sering, S., H. (2012). *Expansion of the Karakoram corridor: Implications and prospects*. Occasional paper no. 27, Institute for Defence Studies & Analyses.
- Schenker, D. (2013). *China's Middle East Footprint*. Policy Analysis, The Washington Institute Improving the Quality of US Middle East Policy. Retrieved from; <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/chinas-middle-east-footprint>.
- Sreejesh, S., Mohapatra, S., & Anusree, M. R. (2014). *Business research methods: An applied orientation*. Springer.
- Saeed, A. (2011). China's quest for energy and diplomacy. *Strategic Studies*, 31(3).
- Saqib, Z., Saeed, R., Ashraf, M R., & Saqib, A. (2023). Assessment of the CPEC Western Road Project in the socio-economic and environmental sustainability of the region. <https://scite.ai/reports/10.29333/ejosdr/12586>.
- Sahu, E. Y. (2023). *FACTBOX: One year on, Russia-Ukraine war remains disruptive for Asian LNG markets*. Retrieved from: <https://www.spglobal.com/commodityinsights/en/market-insights/latest-news/energy-transition/022323-factbox-one-year-on-russia-ukraine-war-remains-disruptive-for-asian-lng-markets>.
- Saddiqui, S. (2024). *Govt set to pay \$27.5b debt by Nov*. retrieved from: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2452960/govt-set-to-pay-275b-debt-by-nov>.
- Tiezzi, S. (2015). *Where Is China's Silk Road Actually Going?*



- The diplomat. (2015).  
<https://thediplomat.com/2015/12/cpec-a-bad-deal-for-the-baloch-people/>.
- The World Factbook. (2024). PAKISTAN. Retrieved from:  
<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/pakistan/>.
- UCSUSA. (2017). Coal and air pollution. Union of Concerned Scientists Science for Healthy Planet and Safer World.
- Ullah, S., Khan, U., Rahman, K. U., & Ullah, A. (2021). Problems and benefits of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) for local people in Pakistan: A critical review. *Asian Perspective*, 45(4), 861-876.
- UNPO. (2023). UNPO in close collaboration with Baloch Students Organisation submits Report to the UN on the ongoing human rights violations of Baluch people in Pakistan. retrieved from: <https://unpo.org/article/22059>.
- Vujadinovič, S., & Šabić, D. (2017). The importance of regions in geographical research. *Zbornik radova-Geografski fakultet Univerziteta u Beogradu*, (65-1a), 195-208.
- Waltz, K. N. (2001). *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis*: Columbia University Press.
- Wicaksana, I. G. (2009). The constructivist approach towards foreign policy analysis. *Indonesian Journal of Social Sciences* Vol. 01, No. 01.
- Waltz, K. N. (2010). *Theory of international politics*: Waveland Press.
- Wolf, S. O. (2016). The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: An assessment of its feasibility and impact on regional cooperation. In *SADF Comment, South Asia Democratic Forum (SADF)*, Brussels, Belgium.
- Wani, A. (2020). Pakistan: Govt report uncovers corruption in CPEC projects. retrieved from: <https://www.orfonline.org/research/pakistan-govt-report-uncovers-corruption-in-cpec-projects-66801/>.
- Xiguang, L. (2016). Building a New Civilisation along the One Belt One Road Initiative. In M. Khan, A. Malik, I. S., & F. U. (Eds.), *China – Pakistan Economic Corridor: A Game Changer* (pp. 1-13). Islamabad: Institute of Strategic Studies Press.
- Yolal, M., Gursoy, D., Uysal, M., Kim, H. L., & Karacaoğlu, S. (2016). Impacts of festivals and events on residents' well-being. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 61, 1–18.
- Yang, L., Asif, M., & Usman, M. (2022). Strengthening Bonds of Friendship between Sino-Pakistan through Chinese Author's Translated Work Published in Pakistan's National Language (Urdu). <https://scite.ai/reports/10.21608/ijahr.2022.256389>.
- Zaheer, C. K. R. (2006). Development and Operations of the Port of Gwadar. *International*



Federation of Shipmaster's Associations.

Zhaoming, Xiong (2014) "The Hephthalite tombs and the maritime Silk Road of the Han Dynasty", *Antiquity*, 88(342): pp: 1229-1243.

Zimmerman, T. (2015). *The New Silk Roads: China, the US, and the Future of Central Asia* (pp. 1-26). New York, NY, USA: Center on International Cooperation.

Zaffar, H. (2016). CPEC: Boon or Bane for Pakistan? Retrieved 2 March 2023, from <https://thediplomat.com/2016/11/cpec-boon-or-bane-for-pakistan/>.

## Appendix:

Question Guide (Public): **Socio- Political and economic impacts of China-Pakistan economic corridor (CPEC) on the region: A case study of CPEC.**

General Information:

Interviewee name (Optional): .....

Age: .....

Occupation: .....

Gender: .....

➤ CPEC which is considered a game changer for the country's development. Is it true that it becomes a source of job opportunities for the people of Pakistan?

.....  
.....

➤ Do you have any idea about how CPEC is beneficial for the flow of trade?

.....  
.....

➤ How CPEC is becoming a source of people to people contact and exchange of cultural values?

.....  
.....

➤ What do you think CPEC plays a vital role in developing the infrastructure of Pakistan?

.....  
.....

➤ What do you think CPEC is bringing advancements in the politics of Pakistan?

.....  
.....



**Norges miljø- og biovitenskapelige universitet**  
Noregs miljø- og biovitenskapelige universitet  
Norwegian University of Life Sciences

Postboks 5003  
NO-1432 Ås  
Norway